IS RUSSIA GOING FASCIST?
MASHA GESSEN

KERRY'S CHEAP SHOT ON IRAQ
THE EDITORS

WWW.TNR.COM ▶ SEPTEMBER 27, 2004

THE NEW REPUBLIC

THE INTIFADA IS OVER

HOW SHARON BEAT IT
Yossi Klein Halevi and Michael B. Oren

HOW HAMAS LOST IT
Joshua Hammer

ISRAEL'S COMING WAR WITHIN
Leon Wieseltier

#BXNRTKG ***AUTO**5-DIGIT 94301
#90701000005544422# 0432 14MAR05 15
RON K UNZ 0001
371 2949-5
555 BRYANT ST
PALO ALTO CA 94301-1704

37>
0 71486 01742 4

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Only the United States and Denmark (population 5.35 million) offer 30-year, fixed-rate mortgages that are refinanceable, without penalty, anytime mortgage interest costs decline. Two countries out of 192. Just two.

Is it a coincidence that these two countries have government-sponsored mortgage systems? Absolutely not.

The 30-year mortgage: A unique system. With unique benefits.

30-year, fixed-rate mortgages – Americans' mortgage of choice for so long we consider it a birthright – are marvelous, wealth-creating vehicles; the most democratic way Americans access capital to build wealth. Our mortgages enable most Americans to make their largest investment (their home), to invest with maximum financial leverage (small down payments), to spread monthly payments over 30 years, and to refinance penalty-free anytime. These homeownership-friendly mortgages are fundamental to the accumulation and equitable distribution of wealth in the U.S.

The 30-year, fixed-rate mortgage has never flourished without strong government support. It is a product invented by government and, initially, fully government insured. Since 1934, federal support of long-term, fixed-rate and refinanceable mortgages has been continuous and indispensable, but is now increasingly delivered and distributed through market mechanisms. Today, Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae are the twin pillars of federal support – government-sponsored but privately owned and managed – supplying private market capital and entrepreneurialism to accomplish public purposes as vital today as ever. www.FreddieMac.com

Freddie Mac

We make home possible℠

© 2004 Freddie Mac

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
MARTIN PERETZ

EDITOR Peter Beinart
LITERARY EDITOR Leon Wieseltier
EXECUTIVE EDITOR J. Peter Scoblic
MANAGING EDITOR Jeremy Kahn
FOREIGN EDITOR Joshua Kurlantzick
SENIOR EDITORS
Jonathan Chait, Jonathan Cohn, Michelle Cottle, Michael Crowley, Gregg Easterbrook, Franklin Foer, Ruth Franklin, John B. Judis, Lawrence F. Kaplan, Ryan Lizza, Noam Scheiber, Andrew Sullivan, James Wood, Jason Zengerle
LEGAL AFFAIRS Jeffrey Rosen
ASSISTANT MANAGING EDITOR
Adam B. Kushner
TNR ONLINE
Richard Just, Editor
Christiane Culhane, Culture Editor
FILMS Stanley Kauffmann
THEATER Robert Brustein
ART Jed Perl
MUSIC David Hajdu
ARCHITECTURE Martin Filler
DANCE Jennifer Homans
TELEVISION Lee Siegel
POETRY EDITOR Glyn Maxwell
NEW REPUBLIC BOOKS (Basic Books)
Chip Rossetti
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Fouad Ajami, David A. Bell, Paul Berman, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Nathan Glazer, Anthony Grafton, David Grann, Robert Kagan, Michael Kinsley, Charles Krauthammer, Jeremy McCarter, John McWhorter, Sherwin B. Nuland, Christopher Orr, David Rieff, Maggie Scarf, Ronald Steel, Cass R. Sunstein, Alan Taylor, E.V. Thaw, Helen Vendler, Michael Walzer, Sean Wilentz, Alan Wolfe, Robert Wright
CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS
Jack Coughlin, David Cowles, Vint Lawrence, David Schorr
FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS
Massoud Ansari, Hassan Fattah, Masha Gessen, Yossi Klein Halevi, Janine Zacharia
ART/DESIGN DIRECTION
Joe Heroun, Christine Car/H2C Media
EDITORIAL-CORPORATE COORDINATOR
Laura E. Obolensky
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR AND INFORMATION-TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR
Bruce Steinke
PRODUCTION MANAGER
Henry Riggs
ASSISTANT EDITORS
Spencer Ackerman, Kara Baskin, Clay Risen
ASSISTANT TO THE EDITOR
Alexander Dryer
ASSISTANT LITERARY EDITOR
Deborah Friedell
ASSISTANT POETRY EDITOR
Melanie Rehak
REPORTER-RESEARCHERS
Telis Demos, Tom Frank, Marisa Katz

PRESIDENT & PUBLISHER
Stephanie Sandberg
GENERAL MANAGER Allen Chin
CIRCULATION DIRECTOR
Lori Fleishman Dorr
ONLINE BUSINESS DIRECTOR Ari Gersen

ADVERTISING SALES & MARKETING
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER Richard Parker
DIRECTOR OF ADVERTISING, WEST
Joan Stapleton Tooley
ACCOUNT MANAGER Julie Sturmak
PUBLISHING REPRESENTATIVE
Perry Janoski, Allston-Cherry, Ltd.
BUSINESS ASSISTANT Alexandra Scott
MARKETING MANAGER
Kate Genser

TNR/ON SYMPOSIA ON PUBLIC POLICY
Joan Daly

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION
ACCOUNTING MANAGER Debra Sotelo
ACCOUNTING ASSISTANT Vanessa Wilson
BUSINESS ASSISTANT Ginnie Lee

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
ROGER HERTOG, Chairman
MARTIN PERETZ
MICHAEL STEINHARDT

THE NEW REPUBLIC
A JOURNAL OF POLITICS AND THE ARTS

SEPTEMBER 27, 2004 WASHINGTON, D.C. ISSUE 4,680 VOLUME 231

COVER STORY

Joshua Hammer 18 **Gaza City Dispatch: Strip Maul** How Hamas lost the intifada.

Yossi Klein Halevi and Michael B. Oren 19 **Center Right** How Sharon beat the intifada—and what the United States can learn.

Leon Wieseltier 38 **WASHINGTON DIARIST | Extirpation**

POLITICS & THE WORLD

4 **CORRESPONDENCE** The real reason Democrats are united, &c.

Peter Beinart 6 **TRB | Character Acting** How President Bush turned the debate about foreign policy into a debate about "character."

The Editors 7 **Opportunity Cost** Kerry's latest tack on Iraq isn't just bad politics, it's illiberal.

8 **NOTEBOOK** Zell goes from bad to worse, &c.

Ryan Lizza 10 **Campaign Journal: Flip Side** Bush's campaign rallies construct a parallel reality—in which Iraq is going great and Kerry wants a truce with Al Qaeda. And they work.

Michael Crowley 11 **On the Hill: Muzzled** Why the new get-tough Democrats in Congress went limp on the assault-weapons ban.

Jonathan Cohn 13 **Missed Target** Virtually everything Bush says about Kerry's health care plan is wrong.

Masha Gessen 14 **Moscow Dispatch: Red to Brown** There is something more terrifying than terrorism looming in Russia.

BOOKS & THE ARTS

Stanley Kauffmann 24 **FILMS | Waugh and Peace** Evelyn Waugh's *Vile Bodies* mutates into *Bright Young Things*, elite nonchalance intact.

Jed Perl 25 **ART | The Clown as Hero** From stylized harlequin to grotesque freak, the clown in art history has represented all the extremes of human nature. Now it stands at the crux of the debate over what the modern century was all about.

Wyatt Mason 30 **The Holes In His Head** *In the Shadow of No Towers* by Art Spiegelman

David J. Rothman 33 **Strong Medicine** *The Truth About the Drug Companies: How They Deceive Us and What to Do About It* by Marcia Angell

Erica Ehrenberg 36 **POEM** | *Cloud Machine*

THE NEW REPUBLIC
Updated daily. On the Web at www.tnr.com.

COVER PHOTO BY *Reinhard Krause/Reuters/Landov*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

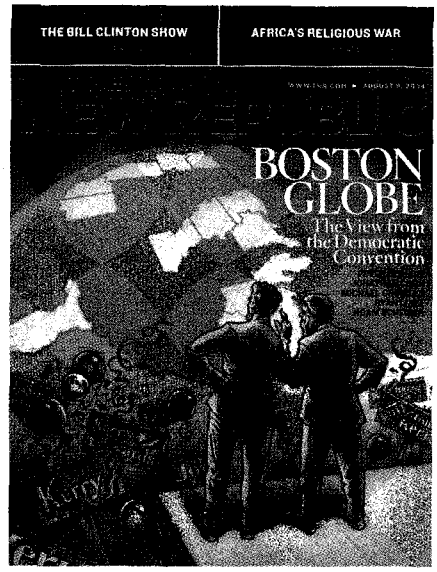
CORRESPONDENCE

ONE WAY

PETER BEINART MISSES THE MAIN reason Democrats are unusually united: the experience of the Clinton wars ("United Appeal," August 9). The prolonged right-wing assault on Bill Clinton was a traumatizing spectacle for many of us rank-and-file Democrats outside the Beltway. It united us like soldiers under heavy fire, ever on the defensive against a rapacious enemy that knew no shame and took no prisoners. I felt I had returned to the Democratic partisanship forged during the McCarthy era, which branded my parents indelibly with fear and loathing of the right wing. For one brief moment, George W. Bush seemed like he might put the rancor behind us. But his administration has been a veritable burning cross of Clinton hatred and right-wing righteousness; indeed, its major failures are directly attributable to a blind, ideological determination to reverse all that Clinton had wrought. With spiteful, puerile lust, the Bushies demolished the Clinton surplus (and now shout that deficits don't matter); abandoned Clinton's Middle East peace process, helping to sustain the determination of the Al Qaeda hijackers prior to September 11; derided Clinton's focus on terrorism and demoted his terrorism adviser, Richard Clarke; and abolished as many of Clinton's environmental protections as they possibly could. Bush has made himself the symbol of right-wing destructiveness that has shocked so many Democrats into a stern "never again" kind of unity. In this sense, Bush hatred does explain Democratic unity, because it goes way beyond the man himself to the right-wing movement that we find so despicable and dangerous.

LARRY DEBLINGER
Nyack, New York

I TAKE ISSUE WITH BEINART'S LINKing of September 11 to the unity of the Democrats as they emerge from the convention. There is no cause and effect here. The primary reason that Democrats have set aside their differences is that the American people were victims of an electoral fraud in 2000. The current administration is an illegitimate one—all other issues are secondary to this. It even floated the idea of postponing the upcoming election to see what the reaction would be. There was far less outrage than there should have been. Of course, we're all angry about the way this administration has used September 11 to advance its anti-democratic agenda, but the solution to this problem, and so many others, is to remove the government and to install a new one. To pull this off, Democrats must be 100 percent focused on this goal, and we are. *That* is what unites us. It should be what unites all Americans. It's easy to wave the flag; protecting the things that the flag represents is much more difficult.



DAVE JULIETTE
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

FAIRLY BALANCED

I HAVE NO DISAGREEMENT WITH Stanley Kauffmann about the film *Orwell Rolls in His Grave*; I haven't seen it ("Speaking Freely," August 9). But I have seen more than a few news broadcasts by the BBC, and I definitely disagree when he says that the BBC broadcasts are candid and the American network news broadcasts are "spoon-fed." Frankly, given the smaller staffs and news budgets that the American networks have, spoon-feeding the audience a story would probably be a real luxury. They give the major stories of the day a quick once-over that might even be considered sparse in the cheapest tabloids. Of course, the broadcasts have to be programmed around commercials, which pay the bills and are put together by people who assume that their audience is still reading newspapers of some sort. Still, most of the network anchors and reporters behave as if they are dealing with a reasonably intelligent audience that can, and will, search out other sources of information.

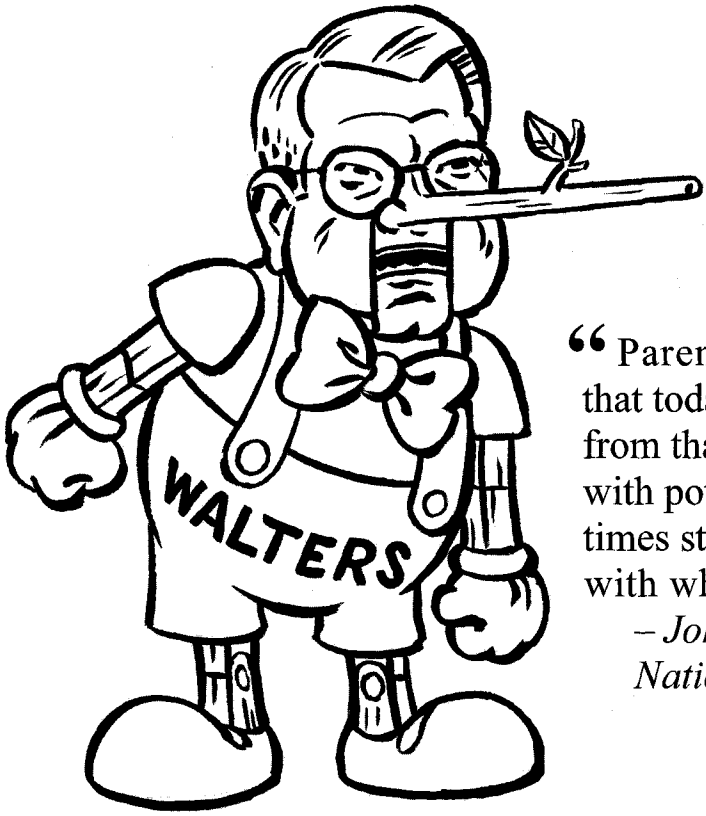
Contrast this with more than a few people at the BBC who seem to assume that they are speaking to brain-damaged five-year-olds who need everything explained very slowly. The reporting is very good—as it often is when reporters have the time and money to do their jobs well—but there is a we-really-know-better-than-you-do-because-we-went-to-Oxford attitude there. And, in some areas of the world, the political attitudes of the producers and reporters are so pronounced that their work there is practically useless—Israel comes to mind. American newscasts may be bland and unadventurous at times, but they manage a general honesty and fairness that is supposed to be the goal of good journalism. (Which is why Fox News is such an anomaly—and such an objectionable one.)

MATTHEW PATTON
Deltona, Florida

Please address letters to Correspondence, **The New Republic**, 1331 H Street, NW, Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20005; letters may also be sent electronically to letters@tnr.com. All letters should include the writer's full name, address, and telephone number; be typed double-spaced; and be fewer than 200 words. Letters may be edited for space and clarity. Please do not send letters via fax.

THE NEW REPUBLIC (ISSN 0028-6583), *Vol. 231, Number 13, Issue 4,680, September 27, 2004. (Printed in the United States on September 16, 2004.)* Published weekly (except for combined issues dated April 12 & 19, June 7 & 14, July 5 & 12, August 16 & 23, September 13 & 20, November 29 & December 6, and December 27, 2004 through January 10, 2005) at 1331 H Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20005. Telephone (202) 508-4444. For advertising inquiries, please contact Mandy Hansen at (202) 508-4444 or our NY sales office at (212) 455-8447. Yearly subscriptions, $79.97; foreign, $119.97 (U.S. funds); Canada, $99.97 (U.S. funds). Back issues, $8.00 domestic and $10.00 foreign/Canada (includes postage & handling). © 2003 by The New Republic, LLC. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing offices. Rights and permissions: fax (202) 628-9283. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. For hard copy reprints, call (202) 508-4444. Microform, Canadian Periodical Index, and CD-ROM are available through ProQuest, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106, Telephone (800) 521-0600. Postmaster: Send changes of address to The New Republic, P.O. Box 420235, Palm Coast, FL 32142-0235. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope (e-mail address: letters@tnr.com). For subscription inquiries or problems call (800) 827-1289 or visit our website at www.thenewrepublic.com.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



"Parents are often unaware that today's marijuana is different from that of a generation ago, with potency levels ten to twenty times stronger than the marijuana with which they were familiar."

– John Walters, Office of National Drug Control Policy

The European Union says it ain't so.

"Statements in the popular media that the potency of cannabis has increased by ten times or more in recent decades are not suported by the limited data that are available from either the USA or Europe. The greatest long-term changes in potency appear to have occurred in the USA. It should be noted here that before 1980 herbal cannabis potency in the USA was very low by European standards....

"The natural variation in the THC content between and within samples of herbal cannabis or cannabis resin at any one time and place far exceeds any long-term changes that may have occurred either in Europe or the USA."

– *Overview of Cannabis Potency, 2004*, European Union Monitoring Centre on Drugs and Drug Addiction (Full report at www.csdp.org/research/insights6web.pdf)

Drug policy should be based on science, not politics.

CommonSenseDrugPolicy.org, Mike Gray, Chair; Robert Field, Co-Chair
DrugWarFacts.org, MedicalMJ.org, AddictInTheFamily.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Character Acting

TRB
FROM WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT BUSH TALKS A LOT about the war on terrorism. And so many have assumed he wants to make this election a referendum on foreign policy. But I don't think that's true. What he wants, I suspect, is to make this election a referendum on "character"—the same issue that helped him so much in 2000. It's just that, after September 11, foreign policy is the easiest way to do that. In 2000, before international affairs was a top voter concern, the Bush campaign said Al Gore showed poor character by exaggerating his invention of the Internet and the prescription-drug costs for his dog. Today, the Bushies say John Kerry shows poor character by waffling on the war on terrorism. An actual debate about the wisdom of Bush's foreign policy—particularly in Iraq—is precisely what his campaign's character strategy is designed to prevent.

The strategy was illustrated most brazenly by Democratic-Senator-turned-Republican-mouthpiece Zell Miller. Halfway though his GOP convention speech, Miller said, "Today's Democratic leaders see America as an occupier, not a liberator." A few sentences later, he repeated, "No one should dare to even think about being commander-in-chief of this country if he doesn't believe with all his heart that our soldiers are liberators." The implication was clear: Bush believes more deeply in the United States than Kerry does. He is a man of superior character.

But the question of whether America is an occupier or a liberator in Iraq is not about faith in America; it is about facts on the ground. Maybe President Bush does believe more strongly that the United States is a liberator (though he has used the word "occupation" several times). Unfortunately, the Iraqi people disagree. According to a May 2004 poll by the Independent Institute for Administrative and Civil Society Studies, 92 percent of Iraqis see Coalition Forces as occupiers. Two percent see them as liberators. Those statistics, needless to say, bespeak a foreign policy disaster. The United States has lost Iraqi hearts and minds, which has made it infinitely harder for us to fight the insurgency that threatens to plunge the country into theocracy or civil war (or both). But Miller wasn't urging Americans to reelect Bush because Iraq has been a success; he provided no evidence that Iraqis feel liberated. He was urging Americans to reelect Bush because the president *believes* Iraq has been a success and Kerry has doubts. And thus, Bush, unlike Kerry, has faith in his country.

No other featured convention speaker (with the partial exception of John McCain) seriously defended the Iraq war. Not a single one acknowledged that Saddam Hussein lacked weapons of mass destruction—and thus, none explained why he posed an urgent threat even without them. Neither McCain, nor Miller, nor Rudy Giuliani, nor Arnold Schwarzenegger, nor Dick Cheney mentioned the word "democracy" in conjunction with Iraq—a silent retreat from the other rationale for war.

Instead, the speakers called Bush's decision to go to war evidence of good character. Giuliani contrasted "President Bush, a leader who is willing to stick with difficult decisions even as public opinion shifts, and John Kerry, whose record in elected office suggests a man who changes his position often, even on important issues." Cheney said, "President Bush does not deal in empty threats and half-measures, and his determination has sent a clear message," in contrast to Kerry, whose "back-and-forth reflects a habit of indecision."

Schwarzenegger's formulation was particularly revealing. Bush, he declared, is "a man of perseverance. He's a man of inner strength. ... The president didn't go into Iraq because the polls told him it was popular. As a matter of fact, the polls said just the opposite. But leadership isn't about polls. It's about making decisions you think are right and then standing behind those decisions. That's why America is safer with George W. Bush as president." The implication perfectly echoes Miller's. Schwarzenegger never bothers to argue that the Iraq war *was* "right." Instead, he says the United States is "safer" because Bush did what he *thought* was right and then stuck by his decision. And that showed "inner strength."

Bush has continued this technique on the campaign trail. He largely ignores the substance of Kerry's critiques of the Iraq war. Instead, he turns the variation in Kerry's critiques into an indictment of his opponent's character. Rather than asking voters to make a judgment on the wisdom of the war, Bush poses a choice between Kerry's "flip-flops" and what he called last week in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, his "clear moral purpose."

But clear moral purpose only produces moral results when it is rooted in reality. And today, just as before the Iraq war, the Bush camp dismisses facts that intrude upon its favored view of the world. In this campaign, President Bush and his allies describe the United States of our dreams—an America always beloved by the people we conquer, an America that never fights mistaken wars and that never loses its moral way, either in Vietnam or Iraq. And, if Democrats dare point out where reality diverges—that the Iraq war was based on a colossal factual miscalculation and that few Iraqis still see it as a moral enterprise—they are savaged for not believing in America.

Behind the Bush campaign's defiant, happy talk about Iraq is a strange indifference to the world we are supposedly saving. It doesn't matter that Iraqis don't see us as liberators as long as we do. It doesn't matter that the world increasingly lacks faith in the United States as long as we have faith in ourselves. "I want you to know that I believe with all my heart that America remains the great idea that inspires the world," Schwarzenegger said in his closing crescendo. He may want to believe that. I do, too. But recent polls suggest that, while people around the world still believe in democracy, fewer and fewer see the United States as its champion. The only way to change that is by understanding why others don't see us as we see ourselves and by adjusting our policies so they better reflect our creed.

That, however, would require admitting that this president and this country are not always right. And that, according to Bush and his supporters, would be a sign of poor character.

PETER BEINART

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Opportunity Cost

So far in this campaign, President Bush has winked as his allies spread lies about John Kerry's war record, allowed the keynote speaker at his nominating convention to equate opposition to Bush's policies with treason, and lied repeatedly about his opponent's record. (And it's only September.) Given all this, it's hard not to be sympathetic if Kerry feels the need to score some cheap political points. But Kerry's latest salvo against Bush's Iraq policy is discouraging

nonetheless. The refrain emphasizes how money spent in Iraq could have been better spent in the United States:

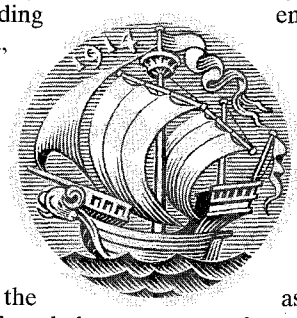
> The cost of the president's go-it-alone policy in Iraq is now $200 billion and counting. Two hundred billion dollars for Iraq, but they tell us we can't afford after-school programs for our children. Two hundred billion dollars for Iraq, but they tell us we can't afford health care for our veterans. Two hundred billion dollars for Iraq, but they tell us we can't afford to keep the 100,000 new police we put on the streets during the 1990s.

Granted, invading Iraq—particularly without broad international support—carried a hefty opportunity cost, some of which can be measured in dollars. There's nothing wrong with pointing this out. But there's a lot wrong with making the point the way Kerry does.

First of all, while the Bush administration has made catastrophic mistakes in Iraq, those mistakes do not include spending too much money. In fact, a foolish desire to conserve money probably contributed to the administration's baffling unwillingness to commit enough troops to secure the peace.

Second, although money for Iraq could have been spent elsewhere, it's not as if Bush refrained from spending money on after-school programs, veterans' health care, and the like because he wanted to spend the money on Iraq. Bush would have withheld money from those things even if the Iraq war had not taken place.

Third, and worst of all, Kerry's mantra casts Iraqis as mere wards of American generosity. (Kerry, in fact, has been hinting at this for months with his line, "I believe it's wrong to be opening firehouses in Baghdad and closing them down in the United States of America.") He is playing to a pinched, illiberal sentiment—using Iraqis the way Republicans have traditionally used welfare recipients. Securing and rebuilding Iraq is a moral good, and, since our invasion is largely responsible for Iraq's current chaotic state, a moral responsibility as well. Iraq's future will also have a direct impact on U.S. security.



It's certainly true that the Bush administration has bungled the postwar phase, perhaps even irreparably. But Kerry's task, if elected, will be to do the best he can with the awful hand he's been dealt. And he will need to persuade the public to follow him. Gaining office by appealing to resentment of money we are sending "over there" will make that task harder.

In the long run, implying that he wants to divert the costs of the Iraq war to domestic needs will symbolically identify Kerry and his party with the image of withdrawing from the world. And it will allow Bush to pose as the candidate willing to make domestic sacrifices to further American security—a mantle of which he is richly undeserving.

If this wasn't enough, it's far from clear that Kerry's new line will even bring him short-term political benefits. Sure, focus groups and man-on-the-street interviews have proffered up plenty of evidence that the public would rather spend money here than in Iraq. (Foreign aid is always unpopular.) But Kerry may once again prove too politically clever for his own good. He initially voted for the war resolution in part because opposition would have made him look weak. Then he voted against $87 billion for rebuilding in part to mollify antiwar liberals in the Democratic primary. That decision, of course, has come back to haunt him, since it is now used by the Bush campaign to make him look inconsistent and anti-military. And Kerry has indeed changed his emphasis radically and repeatedly in response to short-term considerations.

It's that change of emphasis that has been so politically ruinous, allowing Bush to deflect questions about his own failures by painting Kerry as a flip-flopper. Kerry may be making the same mistake again now. A series of smart micro-strategies can add up to an awful macro-strategy.

It's perfectly understandable that Kerry wants to respond in kind to Bush's dirty politics. But Kerry's cheap shot on Iraq is far less likely to damage Bush than it is to damage the liberal values he supposedly holds dear. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTEBOOK

FROM ZELL MILLER, 'CLARIFICATION' . . . FROM THE U.N. AND EUROPE, EQUIVOCATION

MILLER TIME

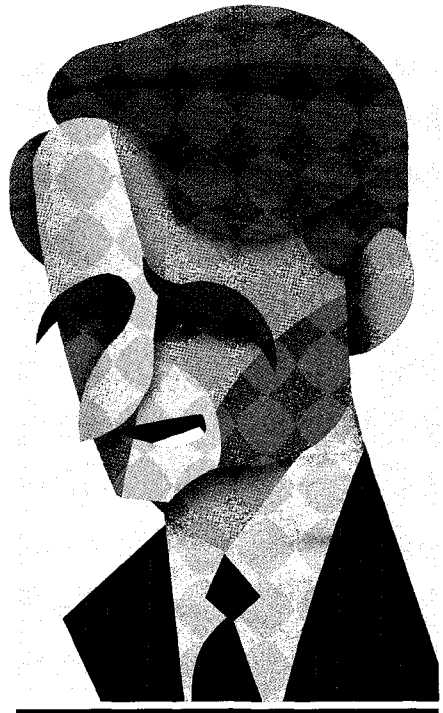
ZELL MILLER PENNED AN OP-ED in Monday's *Wall Street Journal* to answer criticism of his Republican National Convention speech. It was time, the senator wrote, to "set the record straight."

First, Miller attempted to explain away the perception that his speech was "angry," implying the problem was simply that he'd dispensed with a customary opening joke: "[I] wanted to connect with the seriousness of this moment, not the audience." Ah yes, why try to connect to the audience?

Having cleared that up, Miller then trod onto unfamiliar territory, declaring, "Now, about those facts." Yes, the senator admitted, Dick Cheney had opposed some of the same weapons systems that John Kerry had, but Cheney had "waited until after we had won the Cold War." Kerry, "at the height of the Cold War," had been like "a senator in 1943 proposing to scrap the B-29 Bomber or Sherman tank." Except that Kerry did no such thing. After being elected to the Senate in 1984, Kerry consistently voted for annual defense appropriations, waiting until 1990—well after the fall of the Berlin Wall—to vote against a Pentagon budget. (This was, incidentally, the same year Cheney proposed $14.3 billion in cuts to the B-2 bomber program.) Kerry has also supported every annual Pentagon appropriations bill since 1996.

It didn't matter, Miller wrote, that President Bush, talking about Iraq, had used the word "occupiers," the very word Miller had condemned Democrats for using instead of "liberators":

> Do they mean when the president said this in April?—"As a proud and independent people, Iraqis do not support an indefinite occupation—and neither does America. We're not an imperial power, as nations such as Japan and Germany can attest. We are a liberating power."



Zell Miller

Actually, no, they mean when the president said *this* in April:

> [The Iraqis] are not happy they're occupied. I wouldn't be happy if I were occupied either.

Miller wrote, "My critics can call me a psychopath," but to "call me a racist was especially hurtful." Fair enough—we've never called Miller a racist or a psychopath, and we'll consider avoiding words like hater, opportunist, or demagogue. But we'll need this one: liar.

KERRY'S DARFUR TEST

MANY READERS WILL FIND THIS surprising. No country has done more to stop the killing in Darfur, Sudan, than the United States under George W. Bush. As usual, no one has done enough. But Secretary of State Colin Powell has at least called the systematic atrocities "genocide," an important international legal milestone, and his ambassador to the United Nations, John Danforth, has been trying to persuade the Security Council that more demarches and deadlines will be ignored by Khartoum and its crazed, armed satraps, the Janjaweed, who have already raped and pillaged and murdered hundreds of thousands. Even in the refugee camps, the World Health Organization has reported, deaths from disease may soon reach 10,000 per month. That excludes those expiring in Chad. All of this is a tragedy of world-historical proportions.

Just as in Rwanda, the United Nations—and Kofi Annan in particular—is turning a cold and calculating blind eye. Even though Annan has asserted that, in a *New York Times* paraphrase, "Sudan [has] failed to keep commitments to rein in the militias terrorizing the Darfur region," the U.N. secretariat is not prepared to back sanctions, and it is certainly not prepared to back armed intervention. China and perhaps France would veto even the mildest escalatory action. And all Jan Pronk, Annan's special envoy to Sudan, will recommend is an increase in the African Union's monitoring force from about 380 observers to perhaps 5,000. But, without a mandate to establish safe havens and the addition of thousands more troops, even this 13-fold increase would do little to stop the bloodshed. As for the European Union, it has offered money for the African Union force and paid for humanitarian aid, but, when it comes to real action against the Sudanese government, it has opted for a strategy of dithering and delay. The European Union has pointedly refused to use the word "genocide," instead asking the United Nations to further investigate the matter.

All this presents a challenge for John Kerry. The Bush campaign claims

DAVID COWLES

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he would outsource U.S. foreign policy to Europe and the United Nations. He can disprove this—and reaffirm the deepest liberal values—by attacking Annan's and Jacques Chirac's inaction on Darfur, and not just Bush's. Howard Dean, surprisingly and to his credit, has done just that in a recent column. If Kerry did the same, it would reassure many people, and not just Republicans, that the principle of multilateralism is not the only principle he holds dear.

IF ONLY RUSSIA HELPED...

IN RECENT WEEKS, THE WORLD HAS gotten a graphic look at the ability of the Russian military's best-trained units to combat a terrorist insurgency. Russian commandos were deployed to rescue more than 1,000 hostages—mostly schoolchildren—held by Chechen terrorists in the town of Beslan. While planning to storm the school, Russian troops did nothing to prevent a group of armed local residents—many of whom had family members being held captive—from approaching the building. It was these locals who apparently first opened fire on the building after hearing an explosion inside, prompting a fierce firefight with the terrorists (some of whom, just moments before, had been heard on Russian surveillance tapes considering surrender) and forcing the commandos to launch their raid prematurely. In the ensuing 13-hour battle, the school caught fire, and more than 340 of the hostages died. Hundreds more were wounded (some 70 are still missing), and some of the terrorists apparently managed to escape. What's more, as many as 20 elite Russian troops were killed, a senior Russian commander has acknowledged, by friendly fire. This, of course, is not the first time the Russians have terribly botched a rescue. Perhaps all the commentators and politicians who have spent the last year pleading for Russia to fight alongside us in Iraq might want to revise their view. ■

TNR.commentary

Campaign Journal

RYAN LIZZA

TO PROTECT AND SERVE: *U.S. News & World Report* has more on the gaps in Bush's Guard service:

> A review of the regulations governing Bush's Guard service during the Vietnam War shows that the White House used an inappropriate—and less stringent—Air Force standard in determining that he had fulfilled his duty. Because Bush signed a six-year "military service obligation," he was required to attend at least 44 inactive-duty training drills each fiscal year beginning July 1. But Bush's own records show that he fell short of that requirement, attending only 36 drills in the 1972–73 period, and only 12 in the 1973–74 period. The White House has said that Bush's service should be calculated using 12-month periods beginning on his induction date in May 1968. Using this time frame, however, Bush still fails the Air Force obligation standard.
>
> Moreover, White House officials say, Bush should be judged on whether he attended enough drills to count toward retirement. They say he accumulated sufficient points under this grading system. Yet, even using their method, which some military experts say is incorrect, *U.S. News*'s analysis shows that Bush once again fell short. His military records reveal that he failed to attend enough active-duty training and weekend drills to gain the 50 points necessary to count his final year toward retirement.
>
> The *U.S. News* analysis also showed that during the final two years of his obligation, Bush did not comply with Air Force regulations that impose a time limit on making up missed drills. What's more, he apparently never made up five months of drills he missed in 1972, contrary to assertions by the administration.

Meanwhile, *Newsweek* reports a seven-point drop in the percentage of voters who say Bush is "honest and ethical." Democrats insist the shift is related to the attacks on Bush's Guard service, although it might just be the normal settling of Bush's overall bounce.

IRAQ'D

SPENCER ACKERMAN

"THIS IDEA OF A FUNCTIONING DEMOCRACY HERE IS CRAZY": Those are the words of a senior American diplomat in Baghdad, according to *Newsweek*. As violence spirals out of control and claims of progress appear increasingly hollow, many Iraqis are asking whether holding elections in January is realistic:

> "I presume the election will be delayed," says the Iraqi Interior Ministry's chief spokesman, Sabah Kadhim. A senior Iraqi official sees no chance of January elections: "I'm convinced that it's not going to happen. It's just not realistic. How is it going to happen?" Some Iraqis worry that America will stick to its schedule despite all obstacles. "The Americans have created a series of fictional dates and events in order to delude themselves," says Ghassan Atiyya, director of the independent Iraq Foundation for Development and Democracy, who recently met with [Iyad] Allawi and American representatives to discuss the January agenda. "Badly prepared elections, rather than healing wounds, will open them."

These Iraqi officials make the mistake of believing that the Bush administration actually cares about credible elections. You can hold elections by January; it's just that the near-Hobbesian chaos and massive voter ignorance that define Iraq right now ensure that they will be farcical. And neither Iyad Allawi nor the Bush administration has an interest in delaying what they have said again and again is a milestone for post-Saddam Iraq. On the contrary, Bush has every interest in holding up the mere fact of elections—regardless of whether they are fair—as evidence that his "strategy" in Iraq is working. Don't believe me? Here's Allawi:

> If, for any reason, 300,000 people [in Falluja] cannot have an election, cannot vote because terrorists decide so, then frankly, 300,000 people ... is not going to alter 25 million people voting.

And here's noted democracy enthusiast Donald Rumsfeld:

> Now, will it be [a] perfect election? Probably not. Will there be places that are—where the violence is being targeted that will probably prevent people from voting? No, it won't be perfect. But I've never seen an election anywhere that's perfect.

Just as the administration had previously said the road to democracy was "bumpy"—thereby papering over the collapse of its strategy—officials now appear likely to defend elections in an environment of ignorance and anarchy by saying that no election is ever "perfect." Maybe they should listen to Ghassan Atiyya: Badly prepared elections, rather than healing wounds, will open them.

FOR THESE AND OTHER NEW REPUBLIC WEB LOGS, UPDATED DAILY, GO TO TNR.COM.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Campaign Journal
Flip Side

BY RYAN LIZZA

I don't use a lot of big words. /But I'm bent on love if you know what I mean. / I ain't int'rested in bein' politically correct. / I stand right up and say what I believe. / I'm a little rough around the edges, but I think I'm exactly what you need.
—From Travis Tritt's "Rough Around the Edges," a song frequently played at Bush campaign events

MUSKEGON REPUBLICANS ARE not subtle. Two thousand party activists from this southwestern Michigan county are gathered in a hangar at the local airport, waiting for George W. Bush to arrive. They aren't subtle about their love of God and country. First they bow their heads in prayer. A young man explains that the Bush supporters are gathered "to lift high the name of Jesus Christ." Addressing God and speaking of the president, he declares, without eliciting a murmur of concern, "We know you appointed him to the position." After the prayer is the Pledge of Allegiance. After the Pledge is the national anthem. Next, four stout women lead the crowd in a cappella versions of "God Bless America," "God Bless the USA," and a medley of other patriotic songs.

They aren't subtle about John Kerry. Holly Hughes, a local official, succinctly explains, "We don't need a Massachusetts liberal who will flip-flop on all the issues." Representative Pete Hoekstra, the new chairman of the House Select Committee on Intelligence, "explains" that Michael Moore is one of Kerry's principal foreign policy advisers.

Bush isn't subtle either. His entrance is dramatic. The Muskegon crowd watches through massive hangar doors as Air Force One drops out of the sky and taxis to the edge of the rally, the plane nicely framed by bleachers of adoring supporters. Later in the day, at a rally in Holland, Michigan, Bush's campaign bus—a giant American flag on wheels—rolls onto the Ottawa County Fairgrounds to the theme song from the Harrison Ford thriller *Air Force One*, a dramatic orchestral score akin to the music from *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

There are occasional intrusions into this self-contained world. Pockets of Kerry fans often line Bush's route, holding signs (BUSH LIED, 1,000S DIED) and giving him the thumbs-down sign. One hard-looking man, with cutoff sleeves and a bandana on his head, shows his contempt by simply standing silently alongside his pickup truck with his arms crossed and his back turned to Bush's motorcade. In Greenwood Village, Colorado, on Tuesday, two men infiltrate Bush's rally and heckle the president before being drowned out by the crowd and escorted out of the arena. (Karl Rove recently joked to reporters that such protesters are all shipped off to Gitmo.)

BUT, FOR THE most part, spending time on the trail with Bush is like being transported to a parallel universe. The only music is Christian rock and country tunes about plain-talking everymen. The only people who ask the president questions are his most feverish supporters, never the press. In this alternate universe, Iraq and Afghanistan are marching effortlessly toward democracy. The economy is, in the words of former Broncos quarterback John Elway, who introduces Bush in Greenwood Village, "the best in the world." John Kerry, whose platform is to the right of Clinton's in 1992, is calling for a massive expansion of government. Meanwhile, Bush's two most radical ideas, the ones that House Republicans privately insist will top the agenda in Washington next year if Bush wins—a shift toward privatizing Social Security that will cost at least a trillion dollars and a move toward a flat tax—are mentioned only in passing, buried in a laundry list of minor proposals.

And it is all working brilliantly. The key to Bush's success is that, on the stump, he is a master at turning his simple speaking style into a political virtue. Indeed, if you listen to him carefully, much of Bush's case for a second term rests on the idea that he speaks more clearly than John Kerry. "Now, when the American president says something, he better mean it," Bush says at almost every stop. "When the American president says something, he's got to speak in a way that's easy for people to understand and mean what he says." Bush is obsessed with his plainspoken image. If he accidentally uses what he regards as a complicated word, he catches himself and defines it for his audience. "You ask docs what it's like to practice in a litigious society," he tells the crowd in Muskegon. "That means there's a lot of lawsuits. I'm not even a lawyer, and I know the word 'litigious.' " Later, speaking about a health care proposal, he says, "It's commonsensical. In other words, it makes sense to do it this way."

He delights in reciting long, complicated quotes from John Kerry that allegedly reveal the senator's shifting stances. The crowd-pleasing climax of the Bush stump speech is his mocking of Kerry's now-famous line, "I actually did vote for the eighty-seven billion dollars before I voted against it." This is invariably followed by a head-shaking line about Kerry being out of touch with the locals. ("Now, I know Holland, Michigan, well enough to know not many people talk like that around here." "Now, I've spent some time in Colorado. The people out here don't talk like that.") Bush has been so successful at linking Kerry's convoluted speaking style to charges of flip-floppery that even the most innocuous Kerry statements are now ripped out of context and used to assault Kerry's character. Speaking about an important local issue at one stop, Bush says derisively, "Earlier this year, my opponent said a decision about Great Lakes water diversion would be 'a delicate balancing act.' "

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bush pauses and gives the crowd a can-you-believe-it look. "That kind of sounds like him, doesn't it? My position is clear: My administration will never allow the diversion of Great Lakes water." Never mind that Bush and Kerry have the exact same position on the issue—neither favor redirecting water to needy states.

IN FACT, THE genius of Bush's fetish with speaking clearly and plainly is that it makes it much easier for him to get away with saying things that aren't true. In the Bush campaign, simplicity is equated with veracity. One of Bush's favorite rhetorical devices is the straw man. When he speaks of terrorists, he pretends that there is some dangerous faction of Democrats that wants to sign a treaty with Al Qaeda. "You cannot negotiate with these people," he defiantly tells the Muskegon Republicans. "You cannot hope for the best from them. You cannot hope they'll change their ways." Sometimes Bush just *assumes* that some argument he finds ridiculous has been made. "I suspect someone probably said that these people can't be free," he says about Afghanistan at one stop. To the powerful voices allegedly advocating the transfer of U.S. sovereignty to foreign powers, he declares, "I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries."

Similarly, in plain language endlessly repeated, Bush paints a picture of the world and his opponent that is unhinged from reality. His only allusion to the spiraling chaos in Iraq is a passing reference to "ongoing acts of violence" that he delivers suspiciously faster than other lines. He talks about his mission to spread freedom abroad, but there is never a reference to his embrace of autocrats in Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Russia, and elsewhere. He says that unemployment is at a historical low without addressing the million jobs lost during his term. On health care, his characterization of Kerry's plan—"a massive, complicated blueprint to have our government take over the decision-making"—comes close to being made up out of thin air (see John Cohn, "Missed Target," page 13). He even constructs his own protester-less version of his campaign swings. "It's exciting to go on a bus tour," he says in Muskegon, "because a lot of people come out and they want to wave, and it warms my heart to see many people lining the roads like—that's what happens on these trips."

The frustration felt by Democrats about Bush's ability to get away with a campaign of straw men, half-truths, and baseless attacks can't be overstated. In a recent interview with *The New Yorker*, Al Gore described Bush communications operatives as "digital brownshirts." The Democratic National Committee has ended the taboo on the L-word and now flat-out calls the president a liar. The Kerry campaign has belatedly decided that Bush's successful effort to refocus the campaign away from issues and onto character and leadership can only be reversed by making a case that Bush is not just wrong on the issues but fundamentally dishonest about them. It's not subtle, but at least it's simple. ■

On the Hill

Muzzled

BY MICHAEL CROWLEY

AFTER THEY TOOK a beating in the 2002 midterm elections, congressional Democrats vowed to stop shading their differences with Republicans and draw sharper distinctions for voters. Focus groups and polls had dulled the party's message—it was time to fight back.

But, when the federal assault-weapons ban expired this week, few Democrats had much to say about it. A few anti-gun diehards, such as Senators Charles Schumer and Dianne Feinstein, staged press conferences. But Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi offered only token protests. According to House and Senate Democratic staffers, kicking up a public fuss was never really a serious option. "I never heard much discussion about it in leadership meetings or in the caucus," says one Democratic House leadership aide.

And no wonder. There were good reasons for Hill Democrats to take a pass on challenging the ban. First, there's the party's nightmarish recent history with gun control—a record of few accomplishments and several electoral disasters (including the 2000 presidential race, in which gun-control issues may have cost Al Gore Arkansas, West Virginia, and Tennessee). Then there's the fact that the assault-weapons ban itself was ineffectual and not worth a risky fight. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Democrats are still grappling with the vexing challenge of appealing to pro-gun-control voters while eluding the wrath of the National Rifle Association (NRA). In other words, many Democrats probably remained quiet simply because they weren't sure what to say.

IT'S HARD TO overstate how scarred the Democrats remain by the ban's original passage. The federal ban on 19 types of semiautomatic weapons, such as AK-47s and Tec-9 pistols, was a liberal crusade in Bill Clinton's first term. Clinton knew the NRA would mount furious opposition, but, as he wrote in *My Life*, "[S]urely we had not reached the point where the only way to keep congressional seats safe was to leave the American people and police officers in greater danger." In 1994, Clinton, resisting pleas from House Democratic leaders like Tom Foley and Dick Gephardt to abandon the ban, managed to win its passage. Foley and Gephardt "were right and I was wrong," Clinton concedes. That fall, Republicans, with the help of the NRA, swept to power in the House. The NRA bragged that it had knocked off 19 of 24 Democrats on its hit list and, as Clinton writes, "could rightly claim to have made [Newt]

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Gingrich the House Speaker." (For good measure, that fall, a crazed man furious over the ban drove to Washington from Colorado and strafed the White House with an assault rifle.) So it's not hard to understand why the assault-weapons issue was "bringing back nightmares" this year, as one Democratic aide jokes.

This time around, however, Democrats had little real power to extend the ban. Although, by most counts, it enjoyed majority support in the Senate, Democrats assumed that Republicans would simply pull any bill to which they tried to attach an assault-weapons amendment, as they have done numerous times this year on other issues. What's more, a Senate extension would be DOA in the GOP House.

That's no great tragedy. Even supporters of the ban concede it was riddled with loopholes. Thousands of banned guns legally remained in circulation, grandfathered from pre-1994 days. Meanwhile, gun manufacturers made superficial changes in banned models to circumvent the law and produced them by the hundreds of thousands. "We agree that the 1994 law is ineffective," Kristen Rand of the Violence Policy Center told *The Washington Post* recently. "Good public policy would be to institute an effective assault weapons ban." But, so long as Republicans control the House, where GOP leaders are closely aligned with the NRA, that's simply not going to happen.

Couldn't congressional Democrats use the ban's expiration to pummel Republican leaders, as John Kerry did this week to George W. Bush? In theory, yes. According to some polls, more than two-thirds of the voting public support the ban. But, like support for "the environment," support for gun control tends to be wide and shallow. Few people base their votes on it. By contrast, most Democrats feel gun issues may swing otherwise sympathetic voters—especially blue-collar men—against them. "We lost a number of voters who, on almost every other issue, realized they'd be better off with Al Gore," Joe Lieberman told *USA Today* in 2001.

This presents Democrats with a communications dilemma. How to reach suburban pro-gun-control women without frightening blue-collar, anti-gun-control men who would normally support them? Democrats typically argue that what they need is a better way of "talking about" gun control. The problem is that, after years of debating the question, Democrats seem no closer to a good answer.

The preferred tactic at the moment is for rural and southern Democrats to show off their love of guns and make nice with the NRA. A strategy memo produced for Democratic candidates earlier this year argued that, based on data from centrist Democratic pollster Mark Penn, Democrats should be "forcefully backing the right to own a gun." And several pro-gun Democratic candidates in close races—including freshman House incumbents Ben Chandler of Kentucky and Stephanie Herseth of South Dakota and Senate challengers Chris John of Louisiana and Brad Carson of Oklahoma—are hoping their records will keep the NRA at bay.

But this method is unreliable. Several Democrats who harped on gun owners' rights were defeated in 2002. Missouri Senator Jean Carnahan, for instance, made a show of being photographed shooting skeet. South Carolina candidate Alex Sanders—a hunter and NRA member—practically wore a holster on the stump. And, in Colorado, Democrat Tom Strickland cast himself as a friend of gun owners. Yet all three candidates were opposed and thrashed by the NRA. Several Democratic House candidates, such as Maine's Michael Michaud, successfully ran on pro-gun platforms without NRA support. But, overall, 230 of 246 NRA-backed House contenders prevailed. Earlier this year, meanwhile, a top NRA official warned that pro-gun Democrats "are posers and fakes, and they want your guns."

GIVEN THESE WARNING signs, John Kerry has been testing a more aggressive approach. The latest tactic: turning gun control into a homeland security issue. "In the Al Qaeda manual on terror, they were telling people to go out and buy assault weapons, to come to America and buy assault weapons," Kerry said earlier this week. Some gun-controllers are pinning their hopes on this new approach. Richard Aborn, the former president of the Brady Center to Stop Gun Violence and now president of a group called Stop the NRA, points to a recent survey by Democratic pollster Doug Schoen that shows how Bush's lead over Kerry on terrorism issues drops by as much as ten points in Florida, Ohio, and Pennsylvania after the connection is explained to voters. Aborn says the assault-weapons ban might have been saved if only gun-controllers had "demonstrate[d] to the nation the linkage between assault weapons and terrorism."

That sounds a little too good to be true. Which may be why Kerry has seized the issue to attack Bush in other ways as well—on character and populist grounds. Whereas many Democratic candidates in conservative areas want to downplay their differences with Bush, Kerry is looking for contrasts: "George Bush gave police officers his word that he would keep the ban. But, when it came time to extend it, Bush's powerful friends in the gun lobby asked him to look the other way. He just couldn't resist, and he said sure." "It's an opportunity not just to turn George Bush's broken promise into a character issue," says Kerry spokesman David Wade, "but to make it clear Bush isn't honest with the American people, [and] to run to the president's right" on a security-related issue.

Unfortunately, it may be that no magic talking points can counteract the NRA's awesome firepower. And, despite occasional symbolic efforts like the Million Mom March in 2000, Democrats simply have no organizational equivalent. "We in the gun-control community have not matched the grassroots organizing at the local level of the NRA," says Aborn. Once again, the gun-rights crowd seems to enjoy a monopoly on intensity.

Which brings to mind another rueful quote from Bill Clinton's memoir. "After the [1994] election," Clinton writes, "I had to face the fact that the law-enforcement

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

groups and other supporters of responsible gun legislation, though they represented the majority of Americans, simply could not protect their friends in Congress from the NRA. The gun lobby outspent, outorganized, outfought, and outdemagogued them." Ten years later, nothing has changed. And Democrats still aren't sure what to do about it. ■

Bush's health care distortions.

Missed Target

BY JONATHAN COHN

THIS WEEK, PRESIDENT BUSH called John Kerry's health care plan "a massive, complicated blueprint to have our government take over the decision-making in health care"—a theme Bush's new TV advertisements hammer home. If the attack sounds a bit hackneyed, that's because it is. Bush has trotted out the same criticism every time the Democrats have proposed a health care initiative during his presidency, no matter its size, shape, or purpose. Here is Bush in 2001, during a speech critical of modest Democratic efforts to police HMOs: "Government-controlled health care ... and [a] one-size-fits-all approach stifle innovation and do not produce the best of results." Here is Bush in 2003, describing Democratic proposals for introducing prescription-drug coverage to Medicare as "government-run health care ideas ... in which the ... federal government rations care, the federal government dictates coverage." And here is Bush this past January, during the State of the Union address, lashing out at Democratic dogma generally: "A government-run health care system is the wrong prescription."

Bush's latest bluster has the same tenuous relationship to reality. Kerry's proposal would affect how we pay for care but not, for the most part, how we actually get it. More than anything else, it seeks to salvage the existing (but faltering) system of health insurance, in which most working-age people get coverage through their employers. That's a far cry from, say, the British system, in which the government puts doctors on its payroll, or the Canadian system, in which provincial governments decide how many magnetic resonance imaging machines to buy. Nor does Kerry's proposal have much in common with the failed Clinton health care plan, which would have regulated insurance prices and empowered a federal commission to make decisions on which treatments to cover.

Still, like all caricatures, Bush's description of Kerry's plan has a kernel of truth, one rooted in a more thoughtful conservative critique. Kerry's plan would be expensive, whether you believe Kerry's cost estimate ($650 billion over ten years) or Bush's ($1.5 trillion). And, while Kerry is hardly out to socialize medicine, he would ultimately have government providing health insurance to more people. But these two characteristics—the plan's sheer size and the expanded government role—aren't drawbacks. They are precisely what make the plan appealing.

THE KERRY PLAN has three distinct elements, starting with an expansion of Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program, two programs that have succeeded in providing basic medical care to some of the poorest Americans. It is precisely because these programs have grown—even as employers have dropped coverage for employees over the last few years—that the problem of the uninsured isn't much worse. Kerry would make even more people eligible and give states new incentives to enroll them. According to estimates by Emory University health economist Kenneth Thorpe, a former Clinton official, this would bring insurance coverage to some 19 million more people. It would also be expensive, although the exact price tag is in dispute. Thorpe estimated that it would cost the federal government $500 billion over ten years; an analysis by the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) found it would cost $880 billion, though the conservative AEI's figures are somewhat suspect.

But conservatives' more fundamental complaint is that it's simply wrong to keep expanding government programs, since it gives employers less incentive to provide insurance on their own. Research suggests that this "crowding out" effect is real: As many as one out of four people who get coverage through Medicaid expansions would have had private insurance otherwise. But it's a worthwhile trade-off. Thanks to the decline of unions and the availability of cheap foreign labor, employers no longer have much incentive to cover the poorest members of their workforce. To the extent Kerry would have state programs gradually replace private insurance for these people, he's merely accelerating a process that is already underway.

The second element of Kerry's plan is the creation of a Congressional Health Plan, so named because it would make the same coverage that members of Congress use available to some of the uninsured. Right now, individuals and small-business employees frequently cannot get insurance, because they can't spread the burden of medical expenses. Kerry would fix this by allowing them to join a purchasing organization based on the Federal Employees Health Benefits Plan (FEHBP), a system in which people can choose from a menu of different private insurance options. Kerry would also offer subsidies to small businesses and to individuals who can't afford even the FEHBP's relatively low group rates. Precisely because FEHBP is a system of competing private plans, it has long been a favorite remedy of conservatives—i.e., hardly the stuff of socialism.

TNR Senior Editor Jonathan Cohn is also a Kaiser Family Foundation media fellow.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The third element of Kerry's plan is much more controversial: his scheme for "premium rebates." The vast majority of medical expenses come from a relatively small number of people with dire problems that require expensive treatment. Under Kerry's plan, the federal government would assume responsibility for some of these costs, enough to reduce insurance premiums for employees by 10 percent—or up to $1,000 a year per family—provided an employer offered coverage to all employees and enrolled workers in "disease management" programs under which physicians, nurses, or administrators monitor the care of the chronically ill. Theoretically, this should reduce the expense of caring for these people. After all, it's presumably cheaper to give a diabetic insulin than to have him end up in the emergency room with hyperglycemic shock.

Once again, while the campaigns argue over how much this would cost, the more important divide is philosophical. On principle, Kerry believes that the expense of medical catastrophe—something largely uncontrollable—is a burden society should bear. Conservatives, by contrast, think the market already does this adequately. To them, Kerry's scheme merely stuffs extra dollars in the pockets of employers who already pay for coverage and employees who already receive it, hardly a worthy use of federal money. And, since that money has to come from somewhere, they argue plans like Kerry's will inevitably lead to higher taxes, which are bad for the economy.

Yet the tax argument doesn't hold up. Kerry would finance his plan largely by rescinding tax cuts for the wealthiest, restoring tax levels to what they were under Clinton, a period of robust growth. Plus, stabilizing private health insurance has its own economic virtues. As *The New York Times* recently reported, a major reason employers aren't bringing on more full-time workers is that they fear the expense of health insurance premiums. Large U.S. manufacturing companies, meanwhile, are at a disadvantage because their overseas competitors leave the cost of health care to the taxpaying public. "We've looked at Kerry's plan, and it is very appealing," says Dennis Fitzgibbons, director of public policy for Daimler-Chrysler. If Bush thinks Kerry's plan amounts to a dreaded government takeover, he should take a closer look at his own Medicare reform law. Its architects were concerned that offering prescription-drug coverage through Medicare might encourage employers to stop providing drug benefits to retirees, as many now do, so they arranged for the government to pick up some of the tab. It's the same basic idea.

OF COURSE, EVEN if Kerry wins, his plan is a political nonstarter, given GOP control of Congress. But the proposal speaks well of Kerry's judgment. It would help significantly more people than Bush's plan—*four times* as many, according to AEI's own estimate—partly because Kerry is willing to reclaim tax cuts from people who don't need them. And Kerry properly believes that severe financial risk should be spread over the entire population rather than concentrating its devastating effects on a few unlucky souls.

Not that Kerry's approach is perfect. His own cost estimates are probably optimistic. Past efforts to pool high-risk consumers have attracted only those with high medical bills, making coverage prohibitively expensive. But these and other flaws are inevitable by-products of incremental reform. The only way to remedy them is to create a truly universal system that costs more money and imposes more regulation. The real problem with Kerry's plan isn't too much government. It's too little. ■

Moscow Dispatch

Red to Brown

BY MASHA GESSEN

COUNTRIES, LIKE PEOPLE, do not cope well with fear. But countries, unlike people, cannot run away when they are frightened. So they act like people in other ways. They reach for totems they hope will protect them, such as the flag; they become withdrawn, barricading themselves with visas and security checks; they get aggressive; often, they panic. Frightened countries can be extremely dangerous to themselves and to others. Russia right now is a frightened country embarking on steps that gravely threaten its own people and, most likely, the people of other countries.

To be blunt, Russia is about to turn itself into a dictatorship. Using as a pretext the fear that has gripped his country, President Vladimir Putin has announced sweeping political reforms that will eliminate all direct elections except those for president, who, through a convoluted process, will effectively appoint members of parliament. With the state in control of all broadcast media and increasingly dominating print media, the presidential election will also be orchestrated by the Kremlin. Still, as the new political system takes shape, the person at the helm—the actual dictator—might not be Putin. The new leader could actually be a fascist head of an aggressive, nationalistic, war-mongering Russia.

THE FEAR GRIPPING Russia is not necessarily new. In fact, it has just celebrated its fifth anniversary. In September 1999, a series of explosions leveled two apartment towers in Moscow and one in a city in southern Russia, killing more than 300. The random nature of the explosions made them particularly effective terrorism, since they suggested that any anonymous working-class person might go to bed one night only to be buried under piles of collapsed concrete. The consequent

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fear translated into overwhelming support for a new attack on separatist Chechnya, which was presumed responsible for the explosions, though the connection has never been proved. The fear also boosted the political ascent of the man who would lead the fight, Vladimir Putin.

Putin, who became president in 2000, has in fact based his entire political life on the idea that he is the only man who can keep Russia from disaster. He is a man of few public words, but, more often than not, these words have concerned enemies, external and domestic. He has not boasted of his success in combating these enemies—indeed, with the current war in Chechnya entering its sixth year, he has little to point to. Putin's main political argument has been that, if not for him, things would be even worse. He began his campaign for a second term in office with a State of the Federation speech that warned, from the start, "We are faced with serious threats." Putin's list of enemies included terrorists, developed countries that will not let Russia compete in the world, nuclear arms, a weak economy, a dwindling population, an inefficient political system—hardly a list one would expect to hear from an incumbent president unless the president's strategy was to keep his people in a constant state of fear. With help from a servile broadcast media, Putin got his message across. Even as Putin won by a landslide in March, polls showed that Russians did not believe he had done a particularly good job in his first term—but that all other possible candidates were worse.

This month's Beslan massacre seems to have proved to Russians that it can't get any worse. The Beslan school suffered staggering casualties: 339 are dead, more than 90 remain missing, and about half of those killed were children. The sight of the bloodied bodies of children being carried out of the school and the terrified schoolchildren in their underwear, running out in a hail of bullets, was more than any human could bear to watch. But what outraged Russians even more than the sheer horror of the bloodshed was the stream of official lies that accompanied it. For the first three days of the siege, Russian officials claimed that there were only 354 hostages in the building, when in fact there were more than 1,000. Since the siege ended, they have claimed, falsely, that the hostage-takers included Arabs, a black man, and two women who blew themselves up in order to kill 20 hostages on the first day. All lies. A tape of the interrogation of one of the supposed terrorists—the sole man Russian special forces claim to have captured—was broadcast by state television. The man sounded like he was reciting a prepared text. Then, former hostages told journalists they hadn't seen this man among the terrorists. It turned out he had committed a crime several years earlier and was supposed to be in prison when the hostage-taking occurred. Either he was a terrorist who managed to buy his way out of prison, or Russian officials plucked him out of prison to play the role of the captured terrorist.

This mistrust is now widely held. According to a study by the independent Levada Center, 80 percent of Muscovites believe they were not told the truth about Beslan, and 63 percent blame either the government or the security forces for the disaster. According to an eyewitness, on September 7, a young man emerged from the rush-hour crowd at a Metro station not far from Red Square, shouted, "Shit, I can't take it anymore," poured gasoline on his body, and tried to set himself on fire. He was immediately seized by police, but he seemed to be expressing the popular sentiment: Russians really can't take it anymore. According to the Moscow poll, 77 percent believe the government and its security forces cannot protect them from terrorist attacks in the future.

The government is clearly aware of the threat of public outrage, and Putin is fighting back. The Kremlin has tried to redirect public fury by organizing antiterrorism rallies across Russia. Participants are bused in from factories or universities, each of which is told ahead of time how many bodies are required. Protesters are given prefab posters with slogans such as WE OPPOSE TERRORISM and WE SUPPORT PUTIN. During a recent 130,000-strong rally in Moscow, people carrying alternative, self-made posters were not allowed to join the crowd, which was delivered to Red Square and then sealed off by a line of riot police. The speakers—mostly public officials and actors—promised decisive measures, which included reestablishing the Soviet system of residence permits (when one could be arrested for spending the night at a friend's house); fingerprinting everyone; bringing back the death penalty (which should be especially effective in punishing suicide bombers); and vastly expanding the powers of security agencies.

The rallies are part of Putin's broader strategy, which features the only things he knows how to do: crack down on what's left of civil liberties and political freedoms. On Monday, Putin announced his plan to overhaul the electoral system, trashing the Yeltsin-era constitution and returning to the Soviet system of centralized control. By creating a tyranny of the bureaucracy, the Russian government can, on the one hand, show it is taking measures to protect its people and, on the other, silence anyone who says otherwise. The process was already underway before the siege. Several of the most outspoken Russian journalists were prevented from getting to Beslan. Newspaper reporter Anna Politkovskaya was hospitalized after she passed out on her plane to southern Russia. She was poisoned, and she believes the poison came from the security forces, which wanted to keep her from the scene. Meanwhile, Radio Liberty reporter Andrei Babitsky was arrested at a Moscow airport for allegedly getting into a fight, which he believes someone picked with him after prodding from the security forces. Babitsky was allowed out of jail the day after the crisis ended. Then, two days after the massacre, the editor of *Izvestia*, Russia's largest broadsheet, was fired following the newspaper's detailed and graphic coverage of the crisis.

REPRESSION IS THE only weapon that Russian governments have traditionally known, and it is certainly the only weapon that former KGB Colonel Putin knows. But it will not be enough

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to fix the North Caucasus, Russia's southernmost region, which includes Chechnya and North Ossetia, where the hostage-taking happened, and which may erupt into all-out interethnic war. Even during the Beslan siege, when the small town was dominated by police and federal troops, the authorities could not control local residents. Men came to the school with their rifles and machine guns, jumped into the firefight when it began, and succeeded in lynching at least one of the suspected terrorists. Now the residents of North Ossetia are gathering daily to demand the resignation of their governor and to call for avenging their dead by going to war against the neighboring republic of Ingushetia, from whose territory the terrorists seem to have entered Beslan. Observers fear that, when the traditional Russian Orthodox 40-day period of mourning is over, the North Ossetians will make good on their threats. Making the situation even more volatile, neighboring South Ossetia, which is part of independent Georgia, is already at war with the government in Tbilisi—a war in which it is backed by Russia.

Nor will repression be enough to prevent future terrorist attacks. Whatever the original source of the five-year wave of terrorism, by now, terrorism has taken on a life of its own. The events leading up to the school siege showed clearly that the latest ten-day string of terrorist attacks was well-planned: It included two explosions in Moscow and two simultaneous airplane bombings. The Russian security forces were clearly clueless. Even as the wave of terrorism unfolded, the security forces did not think to fortify the Chechen borders or to increase their presence in the surrounding regions.

No, the fury and the fear in Russia are now so extreme that, when the next terrorist attack occurs, the country might well explode. Putin has made this more likely by eviscerating the political system, privatizing the courts, and castrating the media, a process that began with the Kremlin takeover of the private TV channel NTV in 2001, continued with a series of show trials this past year, and has now been completed with Putin's electoral reform. This has left Russians with no place to voice protest—other than the street. There may be a revolution, and it won't be pretty. It could be a fascist revolution.

THERE ARE TWO reasons the next Russian government will be a fascist one. First, Putin has annihilated all opposition except for the Kremlin's pocket opposition, an extreme nationalist party called Motherland. The Kremlin's creation of Motherland was part of a time-honored government strategy of advancing false dichotomies to demonstrate that the sole alternative is far worse than the incumbents. But, almost as soon as it was created a year ago, Motherland took on a life of its own and has become a relatively popular political force.

The second reason is that fascism is what Russians want. They tell pollsters they are willing to sacrifice their freedoms. They say they want all Chechens to be evicted from Moscow and other large cities. They crave an extreme crackdown. "A totalitarian state cannot be blackmailed by the threat of death of civilians," said Mikhail Leontyev, one of Russia's most prominent pundits, in his nightly commentary on federal Channel One, the most-watched network. "Terrorism happens only in democracies." Leontyev's words express both the Kremlin's and the public's agenda: Polls show that a majority of Russians will readily cede their civil liberties to security services. The security services, in turn, are behaving accordingly. Last week, Moscow police beat up a Chechen man, famed cosmonaut Magomed Tolboyev. Human rights advocates say beatings of ordinary Chechens and other Muslims are now commonplace occurrences in Russia.

In fact, the population has become so extreme that Moscow is actually trying to tamp down its wilder impulses. In an effort to control extremism, the Kremlin has directed anger at outside forces. It has led rallies to suggest that the United States and Great Britain are heading a worldwide conspiracy against Russia, using the Chechens as pawns—but pawns to be annihilated—to weaken Russia. This view, too, has been voiced by the extremely popular Leontyev, who said, "You have to understand that the cold war did not begin with Churchill and did not end with perestroika and the new thinking. And we are not the ones who started this war." He then argued that Americans are funding Russia's enemies, including the Chechens and Georgians.

Yet, while Russia is verging toward fascism, Putin might not benefit from the tide. His once-unshakable electoral rating has been falling steadily for months, and in August, it hit an all-time low. In a Levada Center poll, only 38 percent of respondents said Putin had fulfilled the hopes they had when he became president. And that was before the wave of terrorism. After the Beslan tragedy, a third of respondents said they disapproved of Putin's actions during the crisis—an extremely high figure for Russia, where only 10 percent were critical of the president two years ago, after a botched operation to save hostages in a Moscow theater. By cracking down now, Putin is trying both to do what Russians want and to strengthen his own position at the helm. But, if his measures do not prove sufficient to protect his people, Putin will likely lose power. And, in a country with no democratic mechanisms for changing leaders, that change of regime could well be violent, a combination of popular riots and a rebellion of the security forces. As the anger overflows, Russians will demand a leader willing to take even more extreme measures.

Who would emerge from the violence? Right now it's hard to predict. One candidate is Dmitry Rogozin, leader of Motherland and former leader of a fascist political organization called the Congress of Russian Communities. Another possible candidate is Eduard Limonov, a writer whose Nationalist Bolshevik Party is the only viable grassroots political movement in Russia today. The Kremlin is scared of the ultranationalist Limonov, who was jailed for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Big Lie (I)

Are the "occupied territories" really occupied territories?

As Adolf Hitler discovered, the Big Lie will eventually be accepted as the truth. The Big Lie, the monster whopper of our time, is that the provinces of Judea/Samaria, often called the "Bank," are "occupied territories."

What are the facts?

A Brief History: Most of the area now called the Middle East was part of the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire before World War I. Germany lost the war and so did its ally Turkey. The Ottoman Empire ceased to exist and the League of Nations assigned Britain and France as the mandatory powers.

France assumed mandatory control over what is now Syria and Lebanon. Britain assumed mandatory control over all the rest, including "Palestine," which comprised all that is now Jordan and Israel, including the "West Bank." The Golan Heights, which Syria now claims as its age-old patrimony, was originally part of Palestine.

> "The Big Lie of Israel's 'occupation' has been repeated so long and so often that even people of good faith have come to believe it and to accept it."

In 1917, the British issued the Balfour Declaration, under which Palestine was to be the homeland for the Jewish people. In 1921,Winston Churchill, who was then Colonial Secretary of Great Britain, separated all the land east of the Jordan River from the territory designated to be the Jewish homeland, and awarded it to the Hashemites, who established the kingdom of Transjordan.

The Arabs, whipped up by their fanatic clergy, fiercely opposed the presence of the Jews on what they considered "sacred Moslem territory." There was constant warfare between the two groups, which the British tried to arbitrate, always favoring the Arabs, whom they considered more important to their imperial interests.

In 1947, the British decided that they had enough and resigned the Mandate. They left the Arab-Jewish antagonists to their own devices and turned it over to the United Nations. Their solution was to partition Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state. The area west of the Jordan River (the "West Bank") and the Gaza Strip were allotted to the Arabs. Jerusalem was to be an "international" zone. After much soul searching, the Jews accepted the partition and, in April 1948, declared their independence in the area allotted to them by the partition. The Arabs rejected the partition out of hand. On the very day of Israel's birth, five Arab armies invaded the nascent Jewish State. In what must be considered an almost Biblical miracle, the rag-tag Jewish forces decisively defeated the combined Arab might. But Israel had suffered enormous casualties – 6,000 dead, about one percent of its population.

Israel not an "occupier:" Israel stayed in control of most of the area east of the Jordan River, except for the Gaza Strip, which stayed under Egyptian control. The "West Bank" and the eastern part of Jerusalem stayed under the control of Transjordan, which promptly renamed itself Jordan and proceeded to ruthlessly expel all Jews and to obliterate all vestiges of over 2,000 years of Jewish presence in that land.

In the 1967 Six-Day War, Israel recovered the "West Bank," the eastern part of Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, conquered Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, and conquered and annexed the Golan Heights. During the 19 years that Jordan and Egypt were in possession of the "West Bank" and the Gaza Strip, it didn't occur to them or to anybody else that the Palestinians should have a state or even that they were a distinct nationality. The claim for that did not arise until after the Six-Day War.

Jews have been living in Judea/Samaria since Biblical times. The area was made judenrein (free of Jews), following the Nazi model, by Jordan, when it was in possession of the territory. After 1967, Jews moved back into the territory and a great hullabaloo was raised and is still being raised about the not more than 200,000 "settlers," who do not occupy more than 2 percent of the area. But there is no concern about the hundreds of thousands of Arabs, who, lured by the prosperity of Israel, have flooded into the area, nor of the more than one million Arabs who live in Israel proper and who enjoy full rights of citizenship.

Israel acquired the territories (the "West Bank" and Gaza) in defense of an aggressive war waged against it. No country in history has ever been asked to return such territories. Do the Poles return the huge chunk of Germany that they acquired in the wake of World War II? Do the Czechs return the Sudetenland, do the French return Alsace-Lorraine? Of course not! Only Israel is being asked to return such territories. The last sovereign of the "West Bank" and of Gaza were the Ottomans. The "West Bank" and Gaza are unallocated territories. To speak of Israel as "occupier"is preposterous; to speak of it, as Kofi Annan, the Secretary General of the UN does, as "illegal occupiers," is poisonous slander. He knows better. But unfortunately, the Big Lie of Israel's "occupation" has been repeated so long and so often that even people of good faith have come to believe it and to accept it.

This ad has been published and paid for by

FLAME

Facts and Logic About the Middle East
P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco, CA 94159
Gerardo Joffe, President

FLAME is a tax-exempt, non-profit educational 501 (c)(3) organization. Its purpose is the research and publication of the facts regarding developments in the Middle East and exposing false propaganda that might harm the interests of the United States and its allies in that area of the world. Your tax-deductible contributions are welcome. They enable us to pursue these goals and to publish these messages in national newspapers and magazines. We have virtually no overhead. Almost all of our revenue pays for our educational work, for these clarifying messages, and for related direct mail.

To receive free FLAME updates, visit our website: www.factsandlogic.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his political activities and released just over a year ago. But Limonov, though he inspires many young Russians to tackle politics, may ultimately prove too Western for Russia, because his platform makes no reference to the Russian Orthodox Church.

Or it may be someone else. In the near-total vacuum that is Russian political life today, a new name can surface very fast. But the fact that Rogozin and Limonov are the two names most often bandied about points to the part of the political spectrum from which the new leader will emerge: He will be an extreme nationalist dictator. There is indeed something to be more terrified of than terrorism. ■

Gaza City Dispatch

Strip Maul

BY JOSHUA HAMMER

MUSTAFA AL REFEIRI is tired of keeping silent. A 45-year-old farmer from the town of Beit Hanoun in the northern Gaza Strip, Al Refeiri once earned a good living cultivating 80 acres of bananas and citrus trees for wholesalers in Israel. But last summer, the Israeli Defense Forces invaded Beit Hanoun to stop Hamas militants from firing Qassam rockets into the neighboring Israeli town of Sderot. Twenty-one Palestinians died in the ensuing month of fighting, and dozens of houses and fields—including Al Refeiri's—were razed to the ground to deny the militants cover.

In the past, Palestinians in Gaza were fearful of condemning Hamas, but, in the wake of the Beit Hanoun battle, such reticence has faded. "[Hamas] keeps throwing rockets, and we pay the price," Al Refeiri told me as we sat inside a canvas tent donated by the Palestinian Red Crescent, the Muslim version of the Red Cross. Israeli bulldozers had demolished Al Refeiri's three-story house. "But how can we ask them to stop killing? We'll be seen as collaborators against the resistance."

Al Refeiri's disenchantment with Hamas—a group whose suicide bombings and rocket attacks he once supported—reflects a larger shift across Gaza. For the first time, ordinary Palestinians have begun to turn away from the radical Islamic group, saying that the costs of their attacks in Israel have become too much for average Palestinians to bear. At the same time, Israel's targeted killings of Hamas leaders have driven the group's members underground, making those attacks increasingly difficult to carry out. The double suicide bombing of buses in Beersheba two weeks ago, in which 16 Israelis died, was the first successful bombing carried out by the group inside Israel in six months. (Israel fired missiles at a Hamas training camp in Gaza City in retaliation, killing 14 and injuring dozens.) Now, with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon planning to withdraw from Gaza by the end of next year, the inexperienced young men who control Hamas—the top leadership has been wiped out by Israel—are bitterly divided over how to respond.

The growing popular discontent with Hamas has provided a window for other savvy players in Gaza. For the first time, reformers within Yasir Arafat's Fatah Party have begun openly criticizing the Palestinian leader, saying his failure to exercise control over his security forces has contributed to the "anarchy" in Gaza—a message that might help the reformers boost their own political power. Other young Palestinians from another Fatah wing, the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, have focused on marginalizing Hamas, calling on the group to stop launching Qassams. And, most important, some of Arafat's closest aides have seized upon this rising discontent to mount an unprecedented challenge to their leader's power.

THE YOUNG MILITANTS in Fatah and Al Aqsa are led by people like 35-year-old Abu Ibrahim (a pseudonym), a Palestinian security officer who moonlights as a commander of Al Aqsa in Gaza City. Ibrahim says he has watched, dismayed, over the past four years of the intifada as Hamas continued what he saw as an increasingly pointless strategy. "We think that the firing of rockets into Israel is harmful for the Palestinians," the grizzled fighter told me as we sat in an outdoor café on a garbage-filled street in Gaza City. "We have a dispute with the Izzedin Al Qassam Brigades [the military wing of Hamas] because we don't believe the attacks are serving any purpose."

Anger and frustration toward militant operations from ordinary Palestinians is spreading. In a widely reported incident in July, a Beit Hanoun family confronted guerrillas who were firing rockets near their home. Angry words were exchanged, and the gunmen opened fire on the family, killing a teenager. This incident led even members of the Fatah inner circle, who had tried to keep a peace with Hamas, to condemn Hamas's tactics. "I hear a lot of people saying 'We're fed up, we have no jobs, no factories, nothing but destruction and death,'" says Ibrahim Hamad, the mayor of Beit Hanoun and a 30-year veteran of Fatah who lived in exile with Arafat in Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia. "The uprising started as a popular movement, but it went bad when they started to use weapons."

Facing this criticism, Hamas—or what's left of it—is groping for a strategy. Some moderates within Hamas, sensing fatigue with violence, argue that the group should pour its energy into politics. Hamas has agreed to participate in Palestinian general elections, now scheduled for the spring

Joshua Hammer, former Jerusalem bureau chief for NEWSWEEK, *is now a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of 2005, and recent polls put the group's popularity at 30 percent. Palestinian Authority (P.A.) officials are trying to keep the pressure on Hamas to lay down its arms and join a new government. In a letter from his Israeli prison cell, militant leader Marwan Barghouti last month urged all groups to cease attacks against Israel if Prime Minister Ariel Sharon withdraws troops and settlers from Gaza and cedes control of its borders, coastline, and airspace.

But other Hamas militants argue that the group must resist pressures to disarm and should exact revenge for the killings of its leaders—even at the risk of scuttling the Gaza pullout and provoking more retaliation by Israel. "There is confusion. There is no long-term strategy [in Hamas]," says the Palestinian journalist with close ties to the group. "The new leadership is young, inexperienced. ... All the big leaders—[Ismail] Abu Shanab, Sheik [Ahmed] Yassin, [Abdel Aziz] Rantisi—have been killed [by Israel], and it's not easy to create a strong new generation."

Men like Ibrahim don't only have a grudge with Hamas, though. They also want to clean up the graft-ridden Palestinian security forces, which are constantly squabbling with one another. In June 2004, Ibrahim and several of his Al Aqsa comrades sent an open letter to Arafat, demanding that he fire corrupt officials and institute sweeping reforms of the security forces in advance of the Gaza withdrawal. Arafat ignored the letter, he says, and Arafat's cronies within the Fatah Central Committee denounced it as an "American and Israeli plot." One month later, a band of Ibrahim's fighters took to the streets of Gaza City to express their displeasure at Arafat's appointment of his own cousin, Moussa Arafat, as Gaza's new security chief. There, they exchanged fire with P.A. forces and burned down a P.A. security base. Moussa Arafat "is a symbol of corruption," he says. "Appointing him was like waving a stick in front of our faces."

ALL THIS AT first benefited Arafat's main rival, Mohammed Dahlan, 43, former chief of preventive security in Gaza. After resigning his post following a dispute with Arafat, Dahlan this year launched a series of stinging critiques against his ex-boss, calling the P.A. a "corrupt, failing, and indecisive system of government." These critiques won over some former Arafat supporters, such as Ibrahim. Then, this summer, Gaza was convulsed by demonstrations and vigilante attacks against Arafat cronies. Many observers saw the violence as a carefully orchestrated campaign by Dahlan to send a message to Arafat that only Dahlan can keep Gaza from civil war after Israel leaves. "Gaza is a society of mafias—organized gangs that wield a lot of power," one Palestinian journalist in Gaza City told me. "Moussa Arafat has his gang. ... But the most organized mafia of all is Dahlan's."

Dahlan's moves against Arafat may have backfired, however. Ordinary Palestinians consider him tough and competent, but also ruthlessly ambitious and, too often, just as corrupt as Arafat. Though Arafat's popularity has declined sharply in recent months, he is still a revered symbol of Palestinian nationhood and resistance to Israel, while Dahlan is disparaged by some Palestinians as too chummy with both Israel and the United States. The violent summer demonstrations in Gaza sputtered out, Moussa Arafat kept his job, and Dahlan recently secretly turned to Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi to arrange a reconciliation meeting with Arafat. In a recent interview, Dahlan insisted, "I have no ambition to fill Arafat's shoes." And, with Sharon facing growing opposition and threats of violence from right-wing settlers, momentum is slowing inside Israel for a Gaza withdrawal. A scuttled pullout would leave the old guard led by Arafat firmly in control—and would do little for Mustafa Al Refeiri. ■

Israel's unexpected victory over terrorism.

Center Right

BY YOSSI KLEIN HALEVI AND MICHAEL B. OREN

JERUSALEM, ISRAEL

THE RUSSIAN FOREIGN minister, Sergei Lavrov, had planned on offering the usual complaints when he visited Prime Minister Ariel Sharon last week. There was the stalled road map, Israel's security fence, and the recently announced expansion of West Bank settlements close to the Green Line. But, before he arrived in Jerusalem, something happened that changed Lavrov's agenda: the massacre of Russian children by Chechen Islamist terrorists. And so, when he met Sharon on September 6, the main topic of discussion was what advice and assistance Israel could offer Russia in the fight against terrorism.

Ironically, Israel had just buried 16 people—many of them Russian immigrants—after the simultaneous suicide bombings of two buses in the southern city of Beersheba. According to Hamas, those attacks were retaliation for the assassination, five months earlier, of its spiritual and political leaders, Sheik Ahmed Yassin and Abdel Aziz Rantisi. Yet the fact that it took Hamas almost half a year—and

TNR foreign correspondent Yossi Klein Halevi and Michael B. Oren are both fellows at the Shalem Center in Jerusalem.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dozens of failed attempts—to make good on its threat to inflict immediate and massive punishment proves just how successful Israel's war against terrorism has been.

During those same six months, the Israeli army destroyed most of what remained of Hamas's organization in the West Bank and a substantial part of its infrastructure in Gaza. Just last week, Israeli gunships rocketed a Hamas training camp in Gaza, killing 15 operatives. Hamas leaders, who once routinely led rallies and gave interviews to the media, don't dare show their faces in public anymore. Even their names are kept secret. Hardly a night passes without the arrest of a wanted terrorist. Hamas's ranks have become so depleted that the organization is now recruiting teenagers: At the Gaza border, Israeli forces recently broke up a Hamas cell made up of 16-year-olds.

Meanwhile, life inside Israel has returned to near normalcy. The economy, which was shrinking in 2001, is now growing at around 4 percent per year. Even the tourists are back: Jerusalem's premier King David Hotel, which a few years ago was almost empty, recently reached full occupancy. All summer, Israel seemed to be celebrating itself, with music and film festivals and a nightly crafts fair in Jerusalem that brought crowds back to its once-deserted downtown. Everyone knows a terrorist attack can happen at any time. Still, Israeli society no longer lives in anticipation of an attack. The Beersheba bombing, which once would have seemed to Israelis part of an endless and unwinnable war, is now perceived as an aberration. Terror that no longer paralyzes is no longer terror.

Israel's triumph over the Palestinian attempt to unravel its society is the result of a systematic assault on terrorism that emerged only fitfully over the past four years. The fence, initially opposed by the army and the government, has thwarted terrorist infiltration in those areas where it has been completed. Border towns like Hadera and Afula, which had experienced some of the worst attacks, have been terror-free since the fence was completed in their areas. Targeted assassinations and constant military forays into Palestinian neighborhoods have decimated the terrorists' leadership, and roadblocks have intercepted hundreds of bombs, some concealed in ambulances, children's backpacks, and, most recently, a baby carriage.

At every phase of Israel's counteroffensive, skeptics have worried that attempts to suppress terrorism would only encourage more of it. They warned that Israel couldn't close Orient House, the Palestinian Liberation Organization's de facto capital in East Jerusalem, without provoking an international backlash and strengthening Yasir Arafat's hold there. They warned that, by isolating and humiliating Arafat, Israel would only bolster his stature at home and abroad. They warned that, by reoccupying Palestinian cities and targeting terrorist leaders, Israel would only deepen Palestinian rage and despair.

In fact, Israel shut down Orient House in August 2001 with relative impunity, and today, few even recall where it was. Not only has Arafat been confined to the ruins of his Ramallah headquarters for the last two years, but he has become a near-pariah figure even among many European foreign ministers and the target of a revolt in the territories against his corrupt rule. In late August, German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer visited Jerusalem, but not Arafat's headquarters in Ramallah. And, for all their rage at Israeli assassinations and despair over the reoccupation, growing numbers of Palestinians are now questioning the effectiveness of their terrorist war. Last year, in Gaza's Beit Hanoun, residents protested against terrorists using the village as a base for launching rockets into Israel; just recently, a Palestinian teenager was shot dead there after he tried to bar terrorists from his home.

THE PRICE ISRAEL has paid for its victory has been sobering. Arafat may be a pariah, but Israel is becoming one, too. Increasingly, the legitimacy of Jewish sovereignty is under attack. Former French Prime Minister Michel Rocard, for example, has called Israel's creation a "mistake." In Europe, an implicit "red-green-black" coalition of radical leftists, Islamists, and old-fashioned fascists has revived violent anti-Semitism. Along with the desecration of Jewish cemeteries by neo-Nazis and the assaults on Jews by Arab youth, some European left-wingers now sense a sympathetic climate in which to publicly indulge their anti-Semitism. In a recent interview with the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*, Greek composer and left-wing activist Mikis Theodorakis denounced "the Jews" for their dominance of banks, U.S. foreign policy, and even the world's leading orchestras, adding that the Jews were "at the root of evil." In the Arab world, a culture of denial that repudiates the most basic facts of Jewish history—from the existence of the Jerusalem Temple to the existence of the gas chambers—has become mainstream in intellectual discourse and the media. Government TV stations in Egypt and Syria have produced dramatizations based on *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Boycotts of Israel are multiplying: The nonaligned states recently voted to bar "settlers"—including Israelis who live in Jewish neighborhoods in East Jerusalem—from their borders. Among young Israelis across the political spectrum, there's growing doubt about the country's future and widespread talk of emigration.

In its victories and its defeats, Israel is a test case of what happens to a democracy forced to confront nonstop terrorism. In their daily lives, Israelis must contend with the most pressing questions of the global war against terrorism: Can terrorism be defeated? And, in doing so, can basic democratic principles be maintained? Finally, does the moral necessity to defeat terrorism supersede the moral necessity to address the grievances of those in whose name terrorism is committed?

So far, Israel has answered these questions affirmatively, providing valuable lessons for the United States in its own war on terrorism. Arriving at answers, though, has been a tortuous process. Four years ago this Rosh Hashanah, when

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's strategy in the war on terrorism has required him to break with his own party's ideology.

the Palestinian leadership launched this war, Israelis were caught by surprise and demoralized by the violent collapse of a peace process whose success many had assumed was imminent. Prime Minister Ehud Barak was not only negotiating under fire, but offering additional concessions. Cabinet ministers and security figures were insisting that the war against terrorism couldn't be won by military means alone. The Israeli army seemed as disoriented as the politicians: When two reservists were lynched and mutilated by a Palestinian mob inside a police station in October 2000, Israel's initial response was to bomb mostly empty buildings belonging to the Palestinian Authority (P.A.). And, when a French TV crew filmed the death of a 12-year-old Palestinian boy, Muhammad Al Dura, killed in crossfire between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian gunmen, Israel apologized even before thoroughly investigating whether it was responsible for Al Dura's death. (James Fallows, in an exhaustively researched article for *The Atlantic Monthly*, concluded it wasn't, as did the reporting of a German TV station.) Rather than calling the terrorism assault a war, Israelis reflexively adopted the misleading Palestinian term *intifada*—implying an unarmed civilian uprising against an armed occupation. In fact, this was a war by armed Palestinians aimed mostly at Israeli civilians and launched after Israel had agreed to end the occupation—an anti-intifada.

Meanwhile, European and even American leaders were still passionately courting Arafat. In one particularly degrading episode, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright literally ran after Arafat as he stormed out of cease-fire talks in Paris in October 2000 and begged him to return to the table. Washington didn't even place Hamas and Hezbollah on its list of terrorist organizations until November 2001. Rather, most of the international community held Israel responsible for weakening Arafat and his ability to restrain terrorism. Conventional wisdom insisted that the Fatah movement was different from Hamas and that "political" Hamas was different from "military" Hamas.

This is the disaster Sharon faced when he assumed the premiership in March 2001. To respond effectively, he first had to convince Israelis that negotiating under fire would only encourage terrorism and that a military solution for terrorism did indeed exist. And so, one of Sharon's first acts in office was to meet with the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) general staff and demand a plan for victory. Still, he didn't immediately go to war. The Lebanon fiasco of the early '80s had taught him the danger of initiating a military campaign without the support of both the mainstream left and the U.S. administration. (By contrast, Sharon didn't waste time wooing France and other European Union countries that wouldn't support the war on terrorism no matter what Israel did.) This is the first lesson Sharon could teach democratic leaders facing a war against terrorism: Insure domestic consensus and the support of vital allies.

Sharon imposed on himself a regimen of single-mindedness and patience. He concentrated almost exclusively on security, leaving the country's economy and its foreign relations—with the exception of relations with the Bush administration—to other ministers. Nor did he allow himself to be distracted by divisive domestic issues like the secular-religious divide. By becoming the first Likud leader to endorse a Palestinian state, Sharon broke with his own party's ideology and recast himself as a consensus politician. And he established a national unity government with the Labor Party. He acted liked the leader of a nation at war, not a party at war.

SHARON'S FIRST MAJOR test came in June 2001, with the suicide bombing of Tel Aviv's Dolphinarium discotheque, in which 22 young people were killed. His own constituency demanded that he retaliate by reoccupying West Bank cities, but Sharon refused to launch a counteroffensive until the Labor Party agreed. Though denounced by the right as a defeatist, Sharon's restraint was the first step toward effectively combating terrorism.

Meanwhile, Sharon was gradually escalating. He increased the number of targeted killings, further erasing the distinction between "political" and "military" terrorists. And he began the process of isolating and delegitimizing Arafat, curtailing the Palestinian leader's movements. Unlike Barak, Sharon held Arafat personally responsible for terrorism.

One way terrorism succeeds is by obscuring its tracks, allowing its patrons to evade retribution. Initially at least, Arafat conducted the war by remote control, not only main-

AP PHOTO/BRENNAN LINSLEY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

taining the fiction of a division between Hamas and Fatah but even of a division within Fatah itself, between a supposedly moderate mainstream and dissident groups like the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, which were funded by the P.A. Sharon's effort to expose Arafat's ruse culminated in January 2002 with Israel's seizure of a P.A. arms ship, the *Karine A*, loaded with C-4 explosives likely intended for bomb belts. That was the moment Israel exposed Arafat's equivalent of WMD.

The *Karine A* incident substantially strengthened the emerging Bush-Sharon alliance—an alliance that was by no means assured, not even after September 11. Indeed, Bush's initial reaction to the Al Qaeda attacks was to draw a distinction between terrorism against Israelis and terrorism against Americans. And he seemed intent on excluding Israel from his international coalition as his father had done in the Gulf war. When Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld visited the Middle East shortly after September 11, he skipped Israel. Sharon responded with deft brinksmanship. Even as he publicly warned Bush against appeasing the Arabs at Israel's expense, he acceded to Bush's demand that Israel refrain from exiling Arafat.

Sharon's policy was vindicated in March 2002, the bloodiest month in the war, with 133 Israelis killed. Now, even the mainstream Israeli left was finally convinced that Palestinian terrorism wasn't aimed at Israel's policies but its existence. For Israelis, the war on terrorism had become a war of *ein breira*, no choice, no different from 1948 and 1967. The response to the call-up of reserve soldiers for Operation Defensive Shield—the reoccupation of the West Bank—was over 100 percent; reservists who hadn't been called volunteered to serve.

Though Israelis would continue to disagree about how to solve the Palestinian problem, they now agreed with Sharon that Israel must not try to solve that problem until terrorism was defeated. Even Shimon Peres appeared on CNN to defend the counteroffensive. Here was another lesson Israelis had finally internalized: Addressing terrorists' grievances before terrorism is defeated only encourages terrorism and makes those grievances harder to resolve.

No country has been subjected to more relentless terrorism than Israel; nor has any country been subjected to greater scrutiny or vilification. Though the terrorist war was launched by the official Palestinian leadership—and polls have consistently shown a Palestinian majority in support of suicide attacks—Israel considers itself at war with only the perpetrators of terrorism, not with the Palestinian people. Israel has not resorted to the indiscriminate bombings, mass expulsions, blockades of food and fuel that modern states have frequently adopted in wartime. Despite intense fighting, no city in the West Bank or Gaza remotely resembles Dresden in 1945, Hanoi in 1972, or Grozny today. In contrast to Palestinian terrorists, whose goal is to kill the maximum number of Israeli civilians, Israeli soldiers have risked their lives to minimize civilian Palestinian casualties, searching out terrorists in house-to-house fighting rather than calling in artillery. According to the International Policy Institute for Counterterrorism, an Israeli think tank, over half of Palestinians killed in the last four years have been combatants, while nearly three-quarters of Israelis killed have been civilians. Yet another lesson Israel offers the world is that one can defeat terrorists without annihilating the society that hosts them. Though abuses against civilians have occurred—over 600 are now being investigated by the IDF and many more have obviously gone unreported—Israel proves that a war against terrorism can be fought while preserving basic democratic principles. Still, much of the world has branded Sharon a war criminal. In waging war against terrorists, then, especially those who enlist children and pregnant women, one must be prepared to endure some measure of international censure and isolation.

For all its hard-won achievements, Israel's victory is hardly guaranteed. A key component of winning the war on terrorism is convincing the Palestinians that terrorism doesn't pay. That goal will fail if the Israeli Supreme Court, overriding the army's objections, succeeds in placing the security fence along the pre-1967 border. Given that the future border may well be determined by the fence, such an outcome would grant the Palestinians territorial gains through terrorism beyond what they were offered at the negotiating table—and without even recognizing Israel's existence in return.

Israel could also lose if Byzantine domestic politics prevent the emergence of a national unity government capable of implementing decisions, such as unilateral withdrawal from Gaza, that are backed by the Israeli majority. Failure to withdraw from Gaza could provoke widespread refusal to serve in the army and strain Sharon's hard-won rapport with Bush. Conversely, failure to demonstrate that the withdrawal is supported by a majority of Israelis could encourage settlers to resist violently. Sharon, after all, lost a Likud Party referendum on withdrawal. To neutralize his right-wing opponents, he needs to hold a national referendum or new elections to establish beyond doubt that he has a solid mandate to withdraw. Otherwise, the war that began with Palestinians shooting at Israelis could end with Israelis shooting at Israelis.

Americans would be wise to study this final lesson, too: Perhaps the greatest danger in fighting terrorism is the polarizing effect such a campaign can have—not just internationally, but domestically. To avoid this pitfall, a strong political consensus for military action is necessary. That means the president must actively reach out to domestic opposition. But American leaders must also heed Sharon's other lessons. That means an ability to endure criticism from abroad and even to risk international isolation, a willingness to define the war on terrorism as a total war, and a commitment to focus one's political agenda on winning, not on divisive or extraneous concerns. Fulfilling those conditions does not guarantee success. But it does make success possible—as Israel is, at great cost, showing the world. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Advertisement

Outlawed for 41 Years—Now Legal Again

This Investment Launched the World's Largest Family Fortune—And Could Return 665% in the Next 12 Months

Dear Reader,

One investment—which most Americans know almost nothing about—is a secret behind the world's richest families.

I'm going to show you how to take advantage of it personally... and very soon. With amazing results.

We call this investment the "secret currency" because it is beyond the reach of any government or corporation. Let me show you just one example of what I mean…

Mayer Amschel Rothschild was born in Germany in the mid-18th century. When the boy was 11, smallpox killed both his parents.

Mayer was sent to Hanover for a banking apprenticeship. He learned about the secret currency of the controlling elite. Frankfurt's wealthiest families (including the Duke of Weimer and Prince William of Hesse-Kassel) soon hired Rothschild for his expertise, and he became one of the richest men in the city.

Rothschild sent his 5 sons to Europe's financial centers (London, Paris, Vienna, Frankfurt and Naples) to expand the family business. Their knowledge of the secret currency helped.

The Rothschilds Soon Became The Wealthiest Family in the World...

Not even Bill Gates owns as large a share of the world's wealth as the Rothschilds owned.

They built grand estates, hospitals, orphanages and schools; they financed giant projects, like Austria's railroad and the Crimean War; they even bought shares of the Suez Canal.

And it all started with a secret currency–a form of money prized for its safety, anonymity, and profit potential. It's the same investment I'm going to show you how to capitalize on today.

Like Gold... Only Better

Without giving away the secret, I can tell you the secret currency is—as you might suspect—a form of gold. *But it's not your typical gold investment.*

It has nothing to do with mining stocks, mutual funds, options, futures, or bullion. This investment is like gold, only better—with the potential for much higher returns. What's incredible is that President Roosevelt actually outlawed it on March 9th, 1933. The ban lasted 41 years, and Americans weren't allowed to own the secret currency again until 1974, when President Ford re-legalized it. Since then, it has been making the rich even richer…

- From 1972-1974, it went up **348%** while the stock market dropped 34%.
- From 1976-1980, stocks plummeted 35%—the secret currency **gained 1,195%.**
- From 1987-1989, the secret currency **gained 665%,** while stocks went nowhere.

You'll certainly recognize some of the wealthy families who have used the secret currency for generations:

- The Onassis family (Greek shipping magnate Aristotle married Jackie Kennedy)
- The Hunt family of Texas (H.L. Hunt made his billions with oil)
- The DuPonts (owners of the giant chemical company)
- The Morgans (JP was one of the richest railroad men in the world)

If this investment is good enough for the Rothschilds, DuPonts, and Morgans, it's good enough for you and me.

I want to show you how to make as much money as these folks—at least on a percentage basis. All you need is the right information, and a few hundred dollars.

Better Than Stocks, Bonds, or Real Estate

How good is the secret currency? The last time the Salomon Brothers brokerage firm included it in their annual investment survey, **the secret currency ranked #1 over the prior 20-year span**. It beat stocks, bonds, gold, silver, artwork, diamonds, U.S. Treasury bills, real estate, and oil.

I learned about the secret currency only recently, from Dr. Steve Sjuggerud (pronounced sugar-rude).

After college, Steve worked as a stockbroker and Vice President of a mutual fund. He also managed his own hedge fund, and got an MBA, and a PhD in International Finance. Today he has one of the largest investment newsletters in the world, with more than 60,000 paid subscribers.

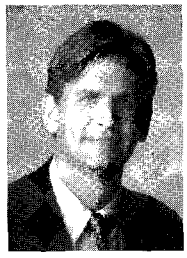
My name is George Rayburn. I am Dr. Sjuggerud's Publisher.

I worked with Dr. Sjuggerud recently to put together a full report on the Secret Currency. It's a 50-page guide called ***The Secret Currency—How to Make Money Even When Stocks, Bonds and Real Estate Lose Value.***

This report includes everything you need to know to capitalize on this situation: What it is, and what to do and say to buy it at the best possible price.

How good is Dr. Sjuggerud's research? Here's what paid subscribers told us recently:

- *"The advice from Dr. Sjuggerud is the best I've ever received. There's no comparison. I'd recommend Dr. Sjuggerud to anyone concerned about their financial future."*
  — Allan Standiford, Toronto, Canada
- *"I've learned more from Dr. Sjuggerud in the last 8 months than I learned in 19 years as a broker." — Alexander Lynch, Sterling, VA*



Dr. Steve Sjuggerud PhD

What would you expect to pay for research that consistently makes solid profits—and could make you 665% without touching the risky stock market?

Well, Dr. Sjuggerud's subscribers pay as much as $2,500 per year. But you can receive a copy of the ***Secret Currency Report*** for the cheapest rate we've offered… **only $19.**

I believe the secret currency could double in value in the next 6 months. **A 5-times return wouldn't be surprising.** The last time the conditions were this good (in 1987), investors made 665% profits. Of course, nothing in the investment world can be guaranteed.

I can understand why you may think I'm exaggerating the power of the secret currency. After all, you may have never heard of it.

That's why you'll have three full months (90 days) to decide if Dr. Sjuggerud's ***Secret Currency Report*** is worth your money. If not, simply return it, and we'll refund your money—even the shipping and handling.

To order your copy of **Dr. Sjuggerud's Secret Currency Report**, call toll-free: 1-888-312-2521. Ask for discount code: **PTWAE901**.

You can also order on-line at www.secretcurrency.com/rep2.html. Or write Secret Currency - Dept PTWAE901 on a piece of paper with your name, address, phone number, and email address. Mail it with a check for $19 plus $5 shipping to:

The Secret Currency Report
Department: PTWAE901
105 West Monument St.
Baltimore, MD 21201

Again, this is the lowest price we've ever offered. I don't know how long it will last.

Sincerely,

George J Rayburn

George Rayburn, Publisher

P.S. When you order Dr. Sjuggerud's 50-page Secret Currency Report, I'll also send you our 150-page ***INVESTOR'S BIBLE***, filled with 242 investment secrets, techniques, and resources. You'll learn how to legally eliminate a mutual fund's hidden fees... where to find the best bank CDs and best on-line stock brokers, and much, much more.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & THE ARTS

STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Waugh and Peace

IN 1997 THE ENGLISH ACTOR Stephen Fry played Oscar Wilde in *Wilde* with poise and elegance and thoughtful wit. That performance, plus other appearances, plus some knowledge of his writings, brightened the news that Fry had adapted and would direct a film of Evelyn Waugh's *Vile Bodies*. Understandably enough, the title had been changed to **BRIGHT YOUNG THINGS**, almost a Waugh phrase and less misleading for a film.

The very first moments of Fry's film show that he understood the temper of the book. What we see first is a party, large, noisy, glittering, fast, people having fun as if their lives depended on it—which is not a far-fetched figure. No date is given, but obviously this is the 1920s in London. Quickly, as the film spins on, the book's doubleness comes clear. I can't contend that everyone will sense this doubleness from that opening, but anyone who has read Waugh's novel, published in 1930, will know that it is a giddily comic novel about war. More precisely, about postwar. Rebecca West saw this at once. Reviewing the book in 1930, she said it was "extremely funny" and "a further stage in the contemporary literature of disillusionment." This opening hectic party is in the capital of a country that, only a few years earlier, had lost a million men in a meat-grinder war.

No reference is ever made to the war as we whirl through more and more parties. At one point a character inveighs against the avalanche of parties, but that doesn't stop them. The only reference to the war, if it is one, is a glimpse of a one-armed taxi driver. The picture ends, as does the novel, with another war, the enemy not named. So all the partying turns out to be a desperate frenzy of fun between wars.

After World War II, in which he was active, Waugh wrote a trilogy called *Sword of Honor* that brought his method, a comic conspectus of horror, to a pinnacle. *Vile Bodies* can now be seen as the beginning of the author's journey to the trilogy. In this earlier book all the characters resemble figures in a ballet, vivid but not deep; all the events—no matter how grave—are treated by these demi-people with very slight concern: an author's loss of a book manuscript, the wafting away of £1,000, a broken engagement, and much more. Of course this airiness is possible only in a certain social class, but since the males of that class had been much involved in the war, such elite nonchalance seems apt enough. It gives these elite people the chance to enact their inner chaos in ways not possible for those who may feel much the same but have to work for a living. Fry comprehends all of this and has the spirit to sustain it. Naturally he uses on the soundtrack some Noël Coward songs of the 1920s, including (inevitably) "Twentieth-Century Blues."

Further, Fry treats almost the entire cast in Waugh mode, as figures in a ballet who happen to have words. They do what they have to do as figures, not as people. A dotty old colonel, a drunken major, a gossip columnist, a madcap young woman, an American evangelist and her band of angels—all do their turns and disappear. But this approach, exquisitely right in itself, leads to the film's only serious flaw. The two leading characters, a young man and a young woman who are engaged recurrently, are treated like real people, like lovers in any light romantic comedy. They ought to be a Mayfair Harlequin and Columbine, but they are presented as reasonably rounded human beings, so they seem to be in a different film from all the other characters.

A bit of Waugh's dialogue may illustrate. Adam, a young man who has just returned to England, is engaged to the high-born Nina, whom he has not seen for a while, and he telephones her.

> "Hullo."
> "Hullo."
> "May I speak to Miss Blount, please?"
> "I'll just see if she's in. Who's calling, please?
> "Mr. Fenwick-Symes."
> "Oh."
> "Adam, you know.... How are you, Nina?"
> "Well, I've got rather a pain just at present."

Fry uses this dialogue—between an engaged couple who have been separated for a time—as is, but he explicates it. For Waugh it is a kind of abstraction, a distillation of attitudes, two bright young things playing a game—life-as-game. To fill in Waugh's abstraction with reactions, gestures, feelings, is to take it out of ballet down to earth.

The adventures of these two, particularly Adam, are the center of such plot as there is: his efforts to raise the money to marry Nina, which lead him to take a job as a gossip columnist and eventually, when circumstances straiten, to sell his interest in her to his rival for her hand. (A faint shadow here of Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*.) Then comes the next war—and Fry adds a short epilogue that neatens things up a bit but is not off-key.

The two leading actors, Stephen Campbell Moore and Emily Mortimer, don't help. They have none of the brittleness, the bijou abstraction that the couple have in the novel and that all the other characters have in the film. Performances almost like the Spy cartoons in *Punch* come from Jim Broadbent as the drunken major, Peter O'Toole as Nina's rich dotty father, and Dan Aykroyd as a press lord. (In an "inside" touch, this lord has a non-British accent because Waugh based him on Lord Beaverbrook, who was Canadian.) The performance that comes closest to capturing the Waugh elixir is

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Fenella Woolgar's as madcapping Miss Runcible, who ultimately commandeers a racing car.

Bright Young Things is the fourth attempt to film a Waugh novel. There also were television series made from some of his books, including the splendidly acted *Brideshead Revisited*, but the television prism is genetically different. I've seen two of the previous films and remember much of *A Handful of Dust* with pleasure. This new film shows that success with a Waugh adaptation must almost always be partial because it means wrenching his people out of one cosmos into a quite different one. In 1956 I wrote to Waugh, on two matters. I dared to congratulate the noted curmudgeon on the two volumes of *Sword of Honor* so far published, and I asked why an author with his gift for dialogue had never written for the theater. He replied quite cordially in a handwritten letter (signed "E. A. St. J. Waugh"). He said that he planned a third volume to fulfill the first two. But he said not one word about the theater. I remember that letter when I see a Waugh film. ■

JED PERL ON ART
The Clown as Hero

I.

THE CLOWN, THAT MERCURIAL figure beloved by painters and poets and songwriters for a very long time, has recently become the darling of the anything-goes-so-long-as-it-sells international art mafia. Bruce Nauman kicked things off in 1987 with *Clown Torture*, a video show in which the clowns are bumbling robots imprisoned in a white-on-white nowheresville. And by now dozens of artist are into the act, so that this summer, when the Cheim & Read Gallery in Chelsea mounted "I Am the Walrus," an anthology of clown-inspired work, the roster included Donald Baechler, Roni Horn, Martin Kippenberger, Paul McCarthy, Jack Pierson, David Salle, and Cindy Sherman, who has an entire book coming out this fall of her self-portraits in clown costumes, often surrounded by an aureole of psychedelic-patterned color. While Sherman, like many of the artists who are into clown themes, is besotted with the ironic kitsch of circus imagery, the clowns of current art are by and large a dark bunch, not so much free spirits as embodiments of the unruly id. Artists are shattering the well-mannered verities of political correctness with a carnival of outrageous theatricality that defines a newer and allegedly edgier version of political correctness.

LA GRANDE PARADE: PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS CLOWN (National Gallery of Canada)

The clowns are only one element in a blackened harlequinade that has spread across the art world. The circus theme, which for generations has attracted the attention of great painters as well as Hollywood moguls and rock-and-rollers, is ready-made for a period in which so many artists like to embrace subjects that have a high-meets-low ambiguity. The sublime funny men who were drawn and painted by Callot, Watteau, Giandomenico Tiepolo, Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, Seurat, and Picasso are signal achievements in the high art tradition's ambivalent relationship with popular entertainment. And the contemporary artists who specialize in crisscrossed cultural identities are drawing on not only the work of those earlier masters, but also the Hollywood movies and the pop and rock tunes that have taken the circus and its denizens as their subject.

Much of the newer work in the galleries and the museums also reflects the seepage into the art world of all the camping and vamping that has fueled the late-night cabaret and club scene since the 1970s. The English performance artist Leigh Bowery turned cross-dressing into a new form of Surrealist clowning with his bizarre masks, wildly elaborate costumes, and synchronized dance routines. Eventually Bowery became Lucian Freud's most famous model, in a series of paintings that might be called "The Clown Undressed." And the ad hoc performances that artists such as Nauman, Vito Acconci, and Chris Burden began photographing and filming in the late 1960s in their studios, in which they were the star and the director rolled into one, always had the potential to link up with the clowning tradition. That is more or less what has happened in McCarthy's raucous videos of recent years, where the artist, in full clown regalia, plays his scatological games in some finished basement or trailer park of the imagination.

A brilliant exhibition, "La Grande Parade: Portrait of the Artist as Clown," which was at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa over the summer, plunged us deep into this tangled history. Masterminded by Jean Clair, the French essayist and curator, this was a show that reached back to the eighteenth century and then ranged widely, juxtaposing artists and media and periods in a way that is rarely done with any success. While the exhibition had more than its share of loose ends, and most of the recent work included was confoundingly bad, it was remarkable to visit a show that revealed unexpected strains in Watteau and Picasso even as the trendiest of recent artists were presented in the most credible way imaginable. What I concluded from Jean Clair's show was that the clown, an image of anarchic man *in extremis*, has become a symbol for many who are rebelling against the idea of art as a system of formal restraints. I was reminded that the howlingly violent clowns of Nauman and McCarthy have always been with us: there are equally disquieting actors pushing at the extremes of affective experience in, say, the fin-de-siècle carnivals of James Ensor.

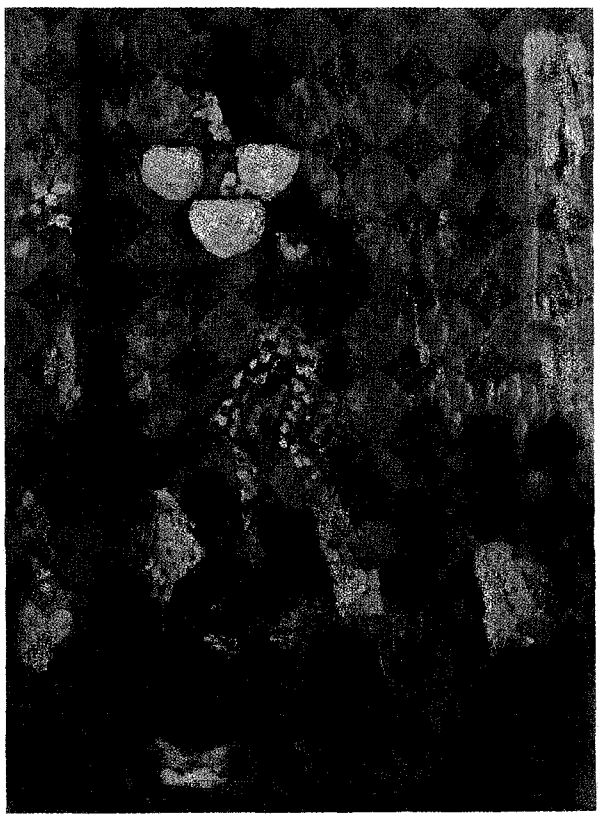
I was also reminded of how quickly clowning moves into images of the bizarre and the grotesque, which is another much-discussed topic in contemporary art, and the subject of SITE Santa Fe's Fifth International Biennial, "Disparities and Deformities: Our Grotesque," organized by Robert Storr, who was for some years a key curator at the Museum of Modern Art. Storr's show (which I have not seen, but which has an interesting catalogue) contains its share of clowns and fools, and the overlap of artists with "La Grande Parade"—including McCarthy, Nauman, Sherman, and Louise Bourgeois—is telling. Both the Ottawa and Santa Fe exhibitions have links to an earlier show called "Carnivalesque," which was organized in large part by the Eng-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lish painter and critic Timothy Hyman, and toured England a few years ago. Hyman's challenging catalogue essay, "A Carnival Sense of the World," takes the circus theme back beyond the *saltimbanques* with which "La Grande Parade" opened to the anything-goes carnivals of medieval Europe, and includes images by Callot and Goya, artists whom Storr also discusses in his essay. "Carnivalesque" closed with a selection of contemporary work, organized by Roger Malbert, that featured McCarthy and Bourgeois, as well as Bowery, who was the subject of a film by Charles Atlas included in "La Grande Parade."

The clown is the mismeasure of man. He represents humanism run amok—a zonked-out, botched humanism. He shows us man's wildest urges, by putting on a funny or scary act. (Clowns tend to be male, though there are some legendary clownesses, including the late nineteenth-century Cha-U-Kao, whom Toulouse-Lautrec drew and painted.) "La Grande Parade" was full of mortified, confounded clowns—men turned into punching bags. For the clown, all norms exist to be violated, all forms are turned inside out. And the insult to man's dignity is meant to suggest our violent essence, our unruly urges—and so to make a mockery of art's age-old love affair with some normative, classical view of humankind. Even the grace of the acrobat, a theme in "La Grande Parade," can suggest troublesome contortions, a vehement rebellion against our earthbound nature.

Hyman includes, among the illustrations in his essay for "Carnivalesque," Renaissance woodcuts of men and women who are all anus, all belly, all breast. And Storr offers, among his grotesques, a candle that Robert Gober has turned into a penis through the addition of a few hairs at its base. Gober has created a number of sly sculptural works that are all torso or all leg, and these fragments might be specimens from a sideshow—the results of the magician's trick with cut-up bodies gone awry. As for many of the figures in the work of John Currin and Lisa Yuskavage, both of whom Storr includes among his "Disparities and Deformations," they are either clowns or freaks or a bit of both. What we are witnessing, then, is a series of riffs on and ripostes to modern art's bold assertion that less may be more. Such reactions, which relate to the postmodern rallying cry that less is a bore, have now given way to the crowd's howling response to the mayhem of the clowns: "More! More!"



COURTESY YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS

PIERRE BONNARD, *The Parade*, 1892

II.

"LA GRANDE PARADE" WAS A meandering exhibition that cast a powerful, troubling spell. Jean Clair, the director of the Musée Picasso in Paris, provided the initial inspiration and edited the catalogue. The entire effort, in which Clair was joined by four other curators, was guided by Pierre Théberge, the director of the National Gallery of Canada. (The exhibition appeared at the Grand Palais in Paris last spring before coming to Ottawa.) And both Théberge and Clair have acknowledged a great debt to the literary critic and cultural historian Jean Starobinski, whose book-length essay *Portrait de l'artiste en saltimbanque* (1970), a study of the impact of the circus and its performers on late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century artists and writers, was a guiding influence.

Starobinski's essay is an extraordinary series of reflections on the spell that the circus has cast on poets and painters. By tracing this history through the Romantics and Daumier and Degas and then into Picasso, Klee, Rouault, Chagall, Apollinaire, and Rilke, Starobinski demonstrates how the men and women who make a living as popular entertainers have come to embody artistic yearnings that are at once mystical, transcendent, and nihilistic. And he manages, amazingly, to suggest all this without overplaying his hand. As the organizers of the Canadian show point out, the *saltimbanques* of Starobinski's title have no clear English equivalent, for this figure was at once an acrobat and a clown, and Starobinski uses the multitudinous nature of the circus performer deftly. Starobinski's clown is both a Bacchic Fool and a Christian Man of Sorrows. In the role of juggler or acrobat, he aims to deny man's essentially earthbound nature—and to suggest a secular transfiguration.

It is not easy to translate a book, full of wide-ranging speculations, into an exhibition that makes sense on the walls of a gallery. And I doubt that "La Grande Parade" would have worked anywhere near as well as it did in Ottawa if Jean Clair had not been involved. He is something of a miracle worker when it comes to fitting complicated intellectual constructions into the what-you-see-is-what-you-get actuality that is an exhibition of works of art. And yet Clair's triumphs (and excesses) as a curator have remained a bit of a puzzle in the United States. The reason, I think, is that so much of his curatorial work, with its cracked chronologies and spliced-and-diced artists and media, is part of a freewheeling European tradition of thematic exhibitions, often coordinated with international expositions of one kind or another, that has never taken hold on this side of the Atlantic. Such shows are more likely to violate the fixed art historical methodologies that generally shape exhibition policies in the museums, especially in the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

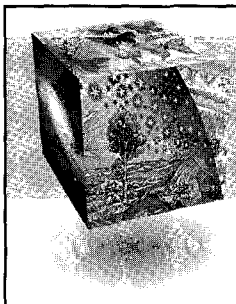
United States and Great Britain.

Museum people are not wrong to regard such thematic shows with a certain skepticism, for while the monographic or chronological exhibition can offer a false sense of security, as if the straight facts were the only ones that ever counted, the thematic approach more often than not degenerates into displays of curatorial immodesty. Clair himself can certainly be a show-off, especially in a project such as "Identity and Alterity," the spectacle that he mounted in the Palazzo Grassi in Venice in 1995, when he was the director of the Venice Biennale. That show, which included everything from crime-scene photos to medical models of the human body to works by Bonnard, Matisse, and Balthus, aimed to trace the transformation of a rational Renaissance man into the inward-turning, sometimes ferociously off-center psyche of modern times. It was an astonishing hodgepodge that left a visitor with all too many contradictory images; it reminded me of De Quincey's opium dreams.

In certain respects, "La Grande Parade" could be seen as an extension and a clarification of themes that Jean Clair had already explored in "Identity and Alterity." In the Canadian show Clair's sense of man *in extremis*—as constantly destabilized both by his own psychic disturbances and by the turbulent state of society—was related to the guiding image of the circus and the circus performer, so that his speculations took on a more coherent shape. With "La Grande Parade," as with "Identity and Alterity," Clair aimed to uncover the Romantic or Expressionist disorder at the very heart of modern art's Parnassus. Late self-portraits by Bonnard were a feature of both exhibitions, no doubt because Clair loves the paradox of these inexhaustibly curious paintings in which one of the supreme arbiters of French hedonism reveals a visage that is baffled, quizzical, almost comical in its meekness. Clair is besotted with anything that strikes him as uncanny, and in this he is very much a man of his moment. What differentiates him from so many curators and critics who have a taste for the weird and the wacky—for work that confounds modern art's classical center—is the sureness of his eye. He can be a bit of a sensation-seeker when he explores the darker side of modern art's Olympian realms; but I doubt that anybody who went through "La Grande Parade" could deny that while many of modern art's climactic achievements suggest a vision of paradise, Jean Clair has located the trouble in paradise.

"La Grande Parade" began with a room devoted to the eighteenth century. And the sky-high quality of the works included was such a pleasure that the rather didactic plotting of the show's themes didn't trouble me. In Giandomenico Tiepolo's drawings, the scads of punchinellos are like an invading army, making the world safe for clowns. The clown takes center stage, literally, in Watteau's *Italian Comedians*, where Pierrot is surrounded by the adorably motley array of players. And as if in response to the elevation of the funny man, the painters Jean-Étienne Liotard and Joseph Ducreux do self-portraits in which their grimacing visages suggest that everybody is becoming a clown.

The casual approach to chronology at "La Grande Parade," with galleries and parts of galleries shifting back and forth between 1890 and 1920 and 1940 and more recent times, enabled Clair and his collaborators to explore the many sides of the circus without running one particular interpretation into the ground. A superb group of paintings, mostly self-portraits, by Picasso, Ensor, and De Chirico revealed the artist slipping into the role of somber, melancholy fool. Then, from Picasso's *Pierrot* of 1918, I found myself turning to a group of photographs of Charles Deburau, the legendary mid-nineteenth-century Parisian mime in his billowing Pierrot costume. Next to these was *Le Bras noir*, Courbet's strange drawing of a pantomime in which Pierrot, reeling back from the vision of the huge black arm reaching out from the earth, is played by another mime, Paul Legrand. And from these nineteenth-century mimes I turned to a room in which I could sit down and watch a scene from Marcel Carné's *Children of Paradise*, that matchless account of theatrical life in nineteenth-century France that was filmed in occupied Paris. Here Jean-Louis Barrault plays a mime inspired by Deburau, a poetical fool pining over the exquisite beauty of a statue, embodied by that ravishing icon of French film, Arletty. At "La Grande Parade," painting, film, and photography—



CALL-FOR-PROPOSALS

Up to $500,000 Grants over Three-to-Four Years

Templeton Research Lectures on the Constructive Engagement of Science and Religion

Deadlines: January 1, 2005, 2006, 2007.

Science can inspire greater reverence, wonder, and awe. It also poses with urgency traditionally religious questions of meaning and purpose, of virtues and values. Science provides a continuous stream of remarkable insights into the nature of reality across a wide range of domains. By giving rise to astonishing transformations, science changes both our world and our worldviews.

The goal is to promote the constructive engagement and original research between the physical, biological, and human sciences and those modes of inquiry and understanding generally found within the domains of theology, religious studies, and philosophy. This project is designed as a catalyst for original research and progress. The program seeks to create long-term networks for vibrant and broadly significant scholarly exchange and continuing interdisciplinary endeavors.

Administrated by the Metanexus Institute on behalf of the John Templeton Foundation, for more information, go to www.metanexus.net/lectures. Applicants are invited to discuss their proposals with the project director prior to submitting their proposals. All inquiries should be directed to:

Metanexus INSTITUTE

William Grassie, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Metanexus Institute on Religion and Science
3624 Market Street, Suite 301
Philadelphia, PA 19104 USA

Voice: 215.789.2200
FAX: 215.789.2222
Email: lectures@metanexus.net
www.metanexus.net/lectures

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and historical figures as well as the fictional figures of art—mingled to give us an especially rich grasp of several cultural, intellectual, and artistic traditions.

As adults, we all recognize the pain and the terror involved in clowning; we see not only the charm but also the folly and the tragedy of Barrault's Pierrot. And of course children, too, can be troubled as well as amused, shaken as well as entertained, by the anarchy of the circus. Clowns can be merciless sadists. They can be helpless victims, too. And the exaggerated, stylized nature of their costumes and their masks can register as a denial of personality, for these props defy the sense of human mobility, suggesting that a single expression—that smile, that frown—is the sum of our being. (Children sometimes recoil in horror when a person they know puts on a mask, because the known has suddenly become unknown.)

In the context of "La Grande Parade" I began to understand the haunted power that Léger pulls out of the ideogram-like simplicity of his faces. These severe visages, with their spooky composure, give his cycle of circus paintings, which culminated in a work known as *La Grande Parade*, a mysterious richness. The mask is a paradox—a simplification of the human visage that complicates a person in ways that are almost incalculable. The clown in his mask makes a joke of man's essence. For certain artists, the very plainness of a mask can give a work its confounding power. This is, I think, the key to Klee's supremely eerie *Wintery Mask* (1925), where the eyes, each a black square, are like Malevich's ultra-abstract emblems, but now fraught with all the agonies and imponderables of two windows on the soul.

Much in the art and the life of the clown suggests an affront to classical norms. The clown makes things up as he goes along; he is often author, actor, director, costume designer, and makeup man all rolled into one. The show itself—the three-ring circus—is calculated chaos. And the itinerant nature of the circus performer's life—the one-night stands, the seasonal nature of the work, the seeming impossibility of maintaining stable relationships—can turn the clown or the acrobat into an emblem of human vulnerability and a go-it-alone spirit, or at least so it seemed to many artists and writers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Clair is expert at using works that are less than excellent to clarify these themes. A big melodramatic canvas by Gustave Doré called *The Performers* (1874), with the theatrical mother in her exotic regalia clutching her injured child while a clown in whiteface, perhaps her husband, looks on in helpless horror, is formidable kitsch—a suggestive vision of circus folk as lost souls. In the context of a show with so many sublime works, a canvas such as Doré's functioned as material culture—as evidence of a vein of feeling in nineteenth-century life. No one can doubt its iconographic relationship with Picasso's *The Acrobat's Family With a Monkey* (1905), which hung nearby, and the comparison suggests how Picasso distills kitsch, how he squeezes it for its iconographic power and gives it a telegraphic eloquence.

The vintage photographs included in "La Grande Parade" were a show in themselves. Several mid-nineteenth-century American daguerreotypes feature powerfully built men in the delicately ornamented costumes that acrobats wore, and the contrast between the bulky bodies and the lacy applied designs suggests a juxtaposition of the conventionally masculine and the conventionally feminine that obviously interested certain artists. In the section of the exhibition devoted to high-wire acts, there were not only marvelous graphic images by Klee, Picasso, and Calder, but also a photograph of a human pyramid that Rodchenko took in 1937 and Harold Edgerton's time-lapse studies of the Russian circus in the 1960s. While many of these photographs are works of art in their own right, at "La Grande Parade" they also served a documentary function, as evidence of what an artist might have seen. And this documentary function had an additional effect, for photographs of real people doing real things tend to undercut the illusions of art—which are, of course, art's realities. Some of the juxtapositions of photographs with paintings and drawings, while immensely interesting and revealing, may have left works by Degas, Ensor, Picasso, Klee, and Calder feeling murkier, more mixed in their motives than they would if they had not been so relentlessly contextualized. If the finest paintings and drawings and sculptures in "La Grande Parade" suggested that artists were dreaming about the circus, the photographs kept reminding us that there was a reality, too, and the reality became a kind of guilty prosaic secret that circulated in the background or depths of the dream.

In the context of the contemporary art world, where photography and video often seem to be elbowing painting and sculpture out of the way, the wide range of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century photographs included in "La Grande Parade" could also look like a curator's way of easing us into a presentation of the photographically based art of the present. One thing is for sure: when Picasso's painting of a Pierrot was seen near photographs of Charles Deburau and scenes of Barrault in *Children of Paradise*, a video of a clown by Bruce Nauman could seem like the logical next step. Certainly the Nauman was going to go down a lot more easily than it would have if all we had seen before was the painting by Picasso. I cannot imagine that a stronger case will ever be made for the work of Nauman and Sherman and McCarthy, or for Jonathan Borofsky's huge mechanized construction of a clown, than was made at "La Grande Parade."

There is no question that the contemporary art fueled by the unruliness of the circus has very deep roots. Even in the eighteenth century, painters knew that the great clowns possessed an exquisite craft that could undermine the orderly restraints that many associated with art. Surely Watteau saw in the goofs and gambits of Harlequin a rejection of formalized structures not unlike his own method of composition, for he organized his paintings intuitively, spontaneously, directly on the canvas. The constant appeal to popular sentiment and popular feeling that you find in the work of so many late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century artists reflects a fascination with what amounts to the evolution of kitsch that some will say leads straight to Cindy Sherman. And maybe it does. Yet being part of a tradition does not mean that you add anything to that tradition—or, indeed, that you are any good for that tradition.

Luckily, in the scheme of "La Grande Parade," all clowns did not lead to Nauman's clowns. The non-chronological approach afforded a certain freedom, and the most recent work included in the show was basically grouped somewhere near the middle, much of it situated in spaces that were somewhat off the main path of the exhibition. At the end of "La Grande Parade," Clair returned to the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

first quarter of the twentieth century, and a paroxysm of Picassos. This work included three spectacular neoclassical paintings of Harlequin; a group of smaller works spanning the artist's career; a videotape of a reconstruction by the Joffrey Ballet of Picasso's collaboration with Cocteau and Satie on the ballet *Parade*; and the front cloth for *Parade*, a huge painting that Picasso executed with a group of assistants and that long ago acquired the pleasantly weathered look of a Pompeian fresco. In his introduction to the catalogue, Théberge explains that he began thinking about this show after hearing a lecture by Jean Clair on Picasso, and considering that it is the work of a painter that inspired this extended meditation on the nature of the clown, it is probably right that at the conclusion of "La Grande Parade" the circus should have been re-absorbed into the high art tradition, as a sort of myth of the artistic vocation.

While Picasso, late in life, devoted some of his etchings to a circus world that is full of acidic observations and anarchic ruminations, "La Grande Parade" closed with his neoclassical vision of the circus—with the circus as a pastoral, an idyll, a *fête champêtre*. Although the front cloth for *Parade* is a vast piece of work, there is something casual, almost sketch-like about the circus troupe gathered around a table and the winged acrobat in her white costume standing atop the gentle, winged horse. This is a work in which the iconography of the circus is reduced to a few sweet nothings writ very large. And so "La Grande Parade" ended where it began, with the circus as an enigma.

III.

"La Grande Parade," which arrives at a time when so many contemporary artists are climbing into the clown car, is much more than a study of the circus since Watteau, although that is in itself nothing to sneer at. It is also a contribution to the roiling debates over what the modern century was all about, and where we go from here. That Jean Clair should be involved is no surprise, for ever since he became involved with "Les Réalismes," the exhibition at the Pompidou Center in 1980 that highlighted representational traditions in twentieth-century art, he has been known as a man who questions the proposition that the art of the twentieth century is essentially abstract.

With "Les Réalismes," Jean Clair argued that modern art, far from being the reasoned, formalized, Apollonian discipline that many have assumed that it was or at least aspired to be, was in fact messy, diffuse, utterly dependent on all the intertwining narratives and unruly emotions that we associate with the human condition. At "La Grande Parade," the clown turns out to be another one of modern art's dirty, incendiary secrets—a kind of stealth bomb aimed at everything that is decorous in the modern canon. Timothy Hyman, in "Carnivalesque," sees a similar power in the phenomenon of the carnival. And Robert Storr, in "Disparities and Deformations: Our Grotesque," is also looking for some way to shake up what many perceive as modern art's cool, imperious surfaces. In each of these exhibitions, the clowns and tricksters and grotesques are marshaled against the same academic version of modern art—the version that is associated with Clement Greenberg, who insisted that art lives or dies on the basis of formal values alone.

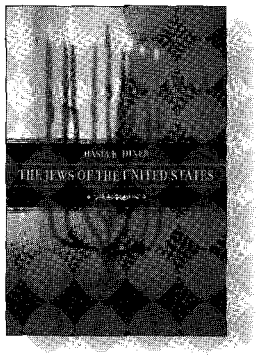
Didier Ottinger, a curator at the Pompidou in Paris, makes the point crystal clear in the catalogue of "La Grande Parade": "The creation of chaos—the very antithesis of the dogma of perfection and purity—is a method used by clowns since time immemorial." Many of the clowns in recent art, he writes,

> are the historical symptoms of a questioning of modernism's omnipotence. Like the clowns of the Romantic era, their goal is to loosen the stranglehold of neoclassicism, of an aesthetic that imposes on art a teleological model of perfection and "purification" (the progress of art, from Cubism to Abstract Expressionism, that has been the modernist bible). The unashamed vulgarity, the "impurity" so integral to a clownish approach, is the alternative to the process of self-purification defended by Greenbergian modernism.

Timothy Hyman, in his essay, "A Carnival Sense of the World," in the catalogue of "Carnivalesque," makes almost the same point, albeit in a gentler, more personal way. "Certainly," he writes, "the vein of exuberant and grotesque fantasy I found in Bruegel and his successors first appealed to me as a young art student in the early 1960s, as a resource—as antidote and alternative." Here was an "antidote to grey lifeless post-war London streets" and an "alternative to those oppressive constructions by which Cézanne led to Cubism, Cubism to Mondrian, Mondrian to Kenneth Noland"—the latter an artist closely associated with Greenberg. In the carnivalesque spirits of Goya, Gillray, Ensor, and Beckmann, Hyman finds what he calls "an alternative canon." And Storr invokes a similar series of names, and also opposes this counter-canon to a standard version of modern art that he associates with Greenberg, explaining that he does not mean to attack Greenberg directly: "my intent is not to declare superiority of the grotesque, past or present, but just to speak up for its legitimacy—or, more accurately—its superb illegitimacy."

There is certainly much that is arid about Greenberg's view of modern art, and these recent explorations in the interlocking worlds of the circus, the carnival, the clown, and the grotesque can surely provide some useful correctives. Yet finally there is an irrevocable logic to formal values that trumps the grotesque, no matter what shape it takes. When

"This is history that engages, informs, and entertains."
—David Myers, author of *Resisting History*



The Jews of the United States, 1654 to 2000
Hasia R. Diner
"An exceptionally fine, candid, and often surprising one-volume narrative of the entire run of American Jewish history."
—Walter T. Nugent, author of *Crossings*

$29.95 at bookstores or order
(800) 822-6657 • www.ucpress.edu
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Storr illustrates his catalogue essay with works by Schongauer, Callot, and Goya, he is presenting these as examples of the power of the grotesque, or at least of the dark and the bizarre, but that is only part of the story. While Callot draws freakish entertainers, his line is one of the most elegant arabesques in the history of art—an epitome of formal resolution. And Goya's grays have a plangency that rivals the greatest Japanese ink paintings. As for Bosch, whose work Hyman mentions, it is one of the paradoxes of his art that even his most disquieting imaginings are realized with a purity of form—a sense of the inherent geometry of a figure, even of a disfigured figure—that has few equals in the history of art. So these artists who are attracted to the anarchy of the carnival and who regard life as a circus of the absurd are also sublimely Apollonian artists. Callot's grotesques would not be anywhere near as appealing if his line were not so exquisite, so pure—so abstract. What makes Picasso's *saltimbanques* so much greater than Doré's is their formal values. These may not be quite the formal values on which Greenberg staked his reputation, but they are not unrelated, either.

A strong argument can be made, moreover, that the fascination of Harlequin and Pierrot, at least in the visual arts, has far less to do with their wild escapades than with the geometrical and coloristic nature of their costumes. A harlequin is a man composed entirely of diamond shapes: he is an abstraction of a figure, a formal construction. As for Pierrot, his all-white costume is another kind of abstraction, an embodiment of some quintessence of color—an idea that Picasso emphasized in his 1918 portrait, where amid the white of Pierrot's costume rainbows appear. It is interesting that Juan Gris, that great interpreter of Harlequin and Pierrot and the spirit of the circus, was not included in "La Grande Parade." If the affect of Gris's work is too cool and too aloof to fit into this exhibition, it is precisely because he suggests another side of the circus: the circus as a re-invention of formalism itself. What Klee and Gris—and Bosch, Callot, and Goya as well—all suggest is that the dispassionateness of art, a classical or neoclassical or academic spirit, is the only tool by which we can fully understand the gross, the irregular, and the bizarre.

For now, however, the clown has inspired among many artists an almost Oedipal spirit of revolt. The embrace of the circus has signaled a rejection of the austere view of modern art. How far, I wonder, can artists go with this rage against formalism, with what Starobinski calls the "auto-criticism that targets the aesthetic vocation itself"? Nobody who has been through "La Grande Parade" can deny that melodrama, wildness, irrationalism, anarchy, nihilism, and even sheer venom are some of the things that fuel the visual arts, but most museumgoers will also acknowledge, I think, that the artists who have made the most of the carnival and the circus and the clown have acted in a spirit that is essentially constructive. While there is no doubt that rage can fuel the fires of genius, in the arts a little rage can go a very long way. ■

Wyatt Mason
The Holes In His Head

IN THE SHADOW OF NO TOWERS
By Art Spiegelman
(Pantheon, 42 pp., $19.95)

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE World Trade Center is the most exhaustively imaged disaster in human history. Never before had photography and calamity mated so fervently, breeding an excess of angles from which to view our vulnerability and fear. The odd synchronicity by which many of the planet's finest war photographers happened to be in Manhattan that day has been widely noted. Men and women of immense competence and sangfroid produced, from the very first hour, images that one could not have staged with all of Jerry Bruckheimer's wealth and catastrophic imagination.

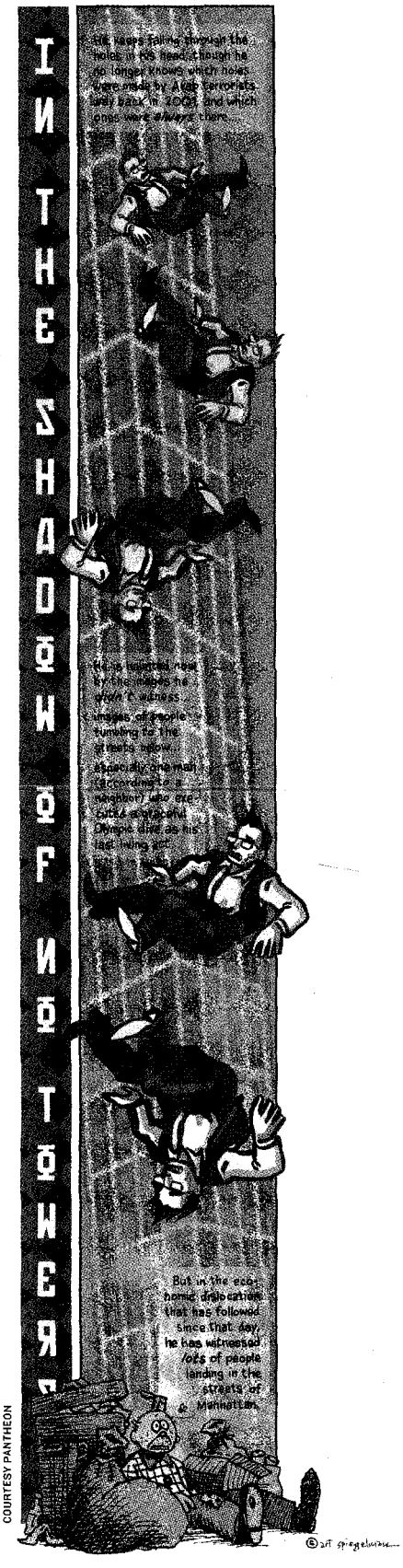
Among thousands, James Nachtwey's photograph of the south tower caught in mid-collapse comes to mind. The unmarred midsection of the north tower fills the right side of the frame. In the background, the falling south tower is spied in a gap between buildings, recognizable only as a rising column of gray smoke and ash and falling metal shards. But the foreground of Nachtwey's image is dominated by the cornice of St. Peter's Church, then one block from the World Trade Center. The large stone crucifix that surmounts the church dominates the frame, its dark silhouette branded onto the rising cloud of gray behind it. It does not take an enormous leap of the imagination to think of this cross as having been held purposely aloft at the decisive moment by a hidden hand wishing, one supposes, to exorcise the rising cloud of evil or to consecrate the mass grave forming underneath.

The impress left on our imaginations by such pregnant images, while deep, buckles under the stampede of guileless video that followed literally ad nauseam. Can one possibly count the number of times the planes were shown approaching the same unbelievable destination? Can one calculate the hours spent observing the rising clouds of burning fuel, or staring at the trapped occupants clinging for their lives, or looking away as those same people fell to their deaths? How many times did each of us watch the towers fall, and from how many angles, and to what end beyond chasing our disbelief with shot after unpalatable shot?

There is no shortage of debate about the morality of disseminating images of tragedy. Some see the presence of a lens as cold: wouldn't the grip that holds it serve a more human purpose by putting camera aside and lending an actual hand? Others consider the propagation of images spawned by suffering to be an exploitation that only multiplies distress, for where's the good in watching, say, Russian parents walk the courtyard of what had recently been a school while they survey row upon row of body bags that contain their children? Still others, though, are unwavering in their belief that a moral imperative underlies such documentation, deeming knowledge our most powerful counteragent against further crimes.

Wyatt Mason is the translator, most recently, of I PROMISE TO BE GOOD: THE LETTERS OF ARTHUR RIMBAUD *(Modern Library).*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED


IN THE SHADOW OF NO TOWERS
But in the economic dislocation that has followed since that day, he has witnessed lots of people landing in the streets of Manhattan.
©art spiegelman

COURTESY PANTHEON

ART SPIEGELMAN, from *In the Shadow of No Towers*

And yet, much as living in a war zone where bombs detonate night and day creates an atmosphere of fear and, should it last long enough, the dehumanizing condition of being inured to that atmosphere, a climate heavy with images of catastrophe can produce the opposite effect of the one desired. Rather than force us to look more closely at what has happened and the human cost the images are meant to showcase, oversaturation can make the unforgettable seem unremarkable. Too many images can turn the horrifyingly strange into something so familiar as to make it all but invisible for its visibility. One can be blinded by literalism.

AFTER 9/11, BEFORE A WEEK had passed, on newsstands already jammed with variations on the same bloody images, a clarifyingly abstract response to the destruction appeared. Rendered by Art Spiegelman, the *New Yorker* cover was simplicity itself: the black silhouettes of the twin towers, standing tall against an off-black background. Tersely eloquent when the country was still dumb with sorrow and loud with rage, the black-on-black image offered a quiet refuge from literalism. While pundits postured, striving to be appropriately significant or suitably poetic, Spiegelman's cover said nothing yet spoke volumes. It was elegiac and stoic. It sidestepped sentimentality and grandiosity. In an antic moment it was helpfully still.

And, based on the contents of Spiegelman's new book, his *New Yorker* cover's poise was all the more remarkable given its maker's mental state at the time of its creation. Like many of his neighbors, Spiegelman, a longtime resident of lower Manhattan, was caught *in extremis* on September 11. His family's apartment was across from the towers; his daughter's high school was at their feet. Chaos and fear and flight dominated the day of the attacks, but Spiegelman and his family suffered no physical losses. What Spiegelman lost was his equanimity.

At the time he generated the *New Yorker* cover's calm, Spiegelman reports in his introduction, he was "going off the deep end in my studio," getting lost "constructing conspiracy theories about my government's complicity in what had happened that would have done a Frenchman proud." He realized the extent to which his self-possession had deserted him when he traveled to a Midwestern university early that October: only then "did I realize that *all* New Yorkers were out of their minds compared to those for whom the attack was an abstraction":

> The small town I visited in Indiana—draped in flags that reminded me of the garlic one might put on a door to ward off vampires—was at least as worked up over a frat house's zoning violations as with threats from "raghead terrorists." It was as if I'd wandered into an inverted version of Saul Steinberg's famous map of America seen from Ninth Avenue, where the known world ends at the Hudson; in Indiana everything east of the Alleghenies was very, very far away.

In the Shadow of No Towers is not a book about September 11. Rather, it is an essay in comics that attempts, through its form, to exhibit Spiegelman's fractured state of mind during the weeks and months he spent unmoored in the catastrophe's wake. Striving to capture the enormous jumble into which his consciousness was thrown, Spiegelman hurls it all back down onto the book's chaotic, oversized pages—spreads one does not so much read as range over, maps to its author's inner turmoil. Spiegelman wants us to get lost with him—a mimetic imperative that provides, he says, "an acknowledgement that my brain had been shattered on September 11th. I was just going to pick up the shiny little glass fragments and see how I could fit them together to make some new object."

The first glimmer of that new object's manic nature may be glimpsed on the book's cover. Spiegelman's black-on-black image of the stalwart towers is there, but it is altered. Superimposed across them at the height where the planes hit is a panoramic window onto antic activity. The far left of the colorful frame contains a partial view of a tiny blue world. On its rearward curve, a single city sits in the path of a long shadow, cast by the planet's only other presence: a goat. The goat, balanced on its front hooves, sports a turban and a black beard. Its hind legs kick at the sky and are rung with a constellation of stars. These pricks of light suggest the sting felt by the range of rear-ends that the turbaned goat has, evidently, just launched into space. Among the famous asses he has just kicked are those of the Yellow Kid, Katzenjammer brothers Hans and Fritz, Old Man Muffaroo, Happy Hooligan, Jiggs—American comic characters from the funnies' history.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The cover puts us on notice that our regularly scheduled tragedy is about to be pre-empted by a cartoon version. This will not surprise Spiegelman's past readers. *Maus*, which told the story of Spiegelman's parents' survival of Auschwitz, caused a sensation with its style: Nazi cats! Jewish mice! Although its maker was credited with bringing depth to a medium supposedly inhospitable to seriousness, critics often missed what made Spiegelman's style succeed: one quickly ceased to notice it. The cat and mouse abstractions brought into focus what literal representations had made blurry with detail. Unable to absorb certain images, unable to comprehend a pile of corpses stacked like firewood, the mind either turned away or while looking ceased to see. Spiegelman's abstract approach quieted the mind, forced the eye, and cajoled the imagination to make a leap into the unimaginable.

Yet for *In the Shadow of No Towers*, Spiegelman replaces his decorous, coherent style with a wild mewing of styles. Some are borrowed from earlier cartoonists, others generated by Spiegelman for the occasion, but all jostle for our attention. Such busyness defies easy summary, but each plate of *In the Shadow of No Towers* is organized around a theme upon which Spiegelman then riffs. Headlined "Waiting for that other shoe to drop!", one page conjures the constant state of fear in which Spiegelman found himself after the attacks. Five separate strips are bordered by nightmarish depictions of the towers glowing red in the moments before they vaporized (a sight he witnessed "that didn't get photographed ... but still remains burned onto the inside of my eyelids several years later"). One, called "Etymological Vaudeville," features a boozer who returns home late and wakes his neighbors with an errantly flung boot. Another, rendered in three different styles, includes a crude, digitized version of the burning towers; a caricatural rendering of Dan Rather; and a cartoony version of a bearded Spiegelman sitting in front of a television, its side perforated by a crashing plane, its screen tattooed with the American flag. Below all these, on a large illustration suggestive of a commemorative plate, terrified city dwellers flee an enormous men's dress shoe that is plummeting from the sky, a cartoon fuse on its heel nearly burned down. The image of the falling shoe is itself overlaid by a mock advertisement for "New! Improved! JIHAD Brand Footwear ... Extra-large sizes only."

A joke, well-turned, can rob terror of its sting; but if it is off-key, it risks rendering tragedy ridiculous. Throughout *In the Shadow of No Towers*, the tenor of Spiegelman's humor oscillates wildly, fed by his outrage over a host of infamies public and private. A strip called "Remember those dead and cuddly ... TOWER TWINS" features Katzenjammer Kids Hans and Fritz in the roles of the twin towers (the flaming buildings top their heads as hats) screaming "Help" and running for aid. Doused in oil by a white-bearded, Old Glory–hatted, Yiddish-accented "Uncle Screwloose" ("Here you go kiddies—de elixir of der gotts!"), the children are incinerated to their skeletons while Uncle S. proceeds to exterminate a Saddam Hussein–headed spider (labeled "Iraknid") of whom one of the Katzenjammers/towers/skeletons says: "Nix, Unk! Wrong bug!"

Jokes that miss are one thing. Suffering caught in the tug of a political zipper is more difficult to ignore. A bald eagle ("Why do they hate us? Why???") is straddled by Bush ("Let's Roll!") and Cheney, who is slitting the bird's throat with, of all things, a box-cutter. Or consider the instance when Spiegelman actually depicts himself as one of the victims plummeting from the World Trade Center. (The text: "He keeps falling through the holes in his head, though he no longer knows which holes were made by Arab terrorists way back in 2001, and which ones were always there ...") When he approaches the ground, Spiegelman subs himself out of frame, his place taken by the hobo Happy Hooligan, now a homeless, trash-bound New Yorker with a fly revolving around his head ("But in the economic dislocation that has followed since that day, he has witnessed *lots* of people landing in the streets of Manhattan"). This is earnest enough, and certainly accurate as far as it describes the monetary collapse that befell New York after September 11, but I wonder if marrying an image of unthinkable violence and nightmarish horror to a slapsticky send-up of bottoming out is, to put it mildly, fair use. What's missing is clear: any true impact.

THE DESIRE TO FIND SOLACE IN the ordered universe of art in the wake of the disordered facts of our lives, the need to cling to it as a buoy that will keep us above the waterline of our fears, is an old commonplace. Virgil tells us how Aeneas, who had fled Troy during its destruction by the Greeks, was later marooned by a storm on an unknown shore. Through wilderness and woods, he comes upon a glorious city. Beautiful though it is, he worries that he and his hidden ship will be taken for infidels and destroyed like so much else they've already lost. Still brave, Aeneas enters the temple at the city center in the hope that he might make himself known to its elders. While he waits uneasily, he notices that upon the walls of the temple are many murals. The scenes that they depict seem familiar to Aeneas, and so he examines them. He does not believe his eyes: they are panoramas of Troy. Of the great war, the battles with the Greeks, the terrible invasion, the torching of the city—images of Trojan bravery even in defeat, everywhere visible within this foreign shrine:

> Here Aeneas
> Halted, and tears came.
> "What spot on earth ...
> Is not full of the story of our sorrow?
> Look, here is Priam. Even so far away
> Great valor has due honor; they weep
> here
> For how the world goes, and our life
> that passes
> Touches their hearts. Throw off your
> fear. This fame
> Insures some kind of refuge."
> He broke off
> To feast his eyes and mind on a mere
> image,
> Sighing often, cheeks grown wet with
> tears ...
> He stood enthralled, devouring all in
> one long gaze.

Does *In the Shadow of No Towers* enthrall? Collaged keepsake, nifty scrapbook, cartoon family album, antic journal, its pages are beautifully composed, but they barely touch hearts. Its frenetic marrying of styles, while it keeps a reader's attention, also produces an estrangement from the distress that it describes: it sets the reader adrift. And this all seems to be by design, for Spiegelman seems less concerned with reaching us than with demonstrating just how unreachable these circumstances left him. It would be a critical error to fault Spiegelman's book for failing to exhibit qualities to which it neither aspired nor strived to attain; but given the very lim-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ited goal he set for himself, one can still say that by attaining it Spiegelman has surely fallen short.

"If I hadn't done these pages," he said recently, "it would be hard to remember just what a blanket of somnolescent silence we were living in." This, too, is an abstraction. For by "silence," Spiegelman means the degree to which he feels the mainstream media capitulated to the administration party line of hysterically colored alerts and deceitfully justified war. While I sympathize with Spiegelman's frustration, I do not believe that thinking people have forgotten any of it. The real frustration, and an unrealistic one, is that not everyone shares such feelings. While *In the Shadow of No Towers* certainly airs Spiegelman's own feelings—of fear, of rage, of dislocation and depression—their depiction is unlikely to make anyone not already disposed to such worry feel its weight. Or, put another way, I do not believe that the means Spiegelman has assembled to ensure that we "remember" are, in this case, enduring means. Whereas *Maus* managed to find the perfect use for abstraction through a measured, clarifying dose, *In the Shadow of No Towers* is buried in a cloud of it. And one can be blinded by abstraction. ■

David J. Rothman
Strong Medicine

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE DRUG COMPANIES: HOW THEY DECEIVE US AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT
By Marcia Angell
(Random House, 305 pp., $24.95)

I.

THESE ARE NOT BOOM TIMES for drug companies. Their reputations stand at an all-time low. A recent Harris poll found that only 13 percent of respondents believed that drug companies are "generally honest and trustworthy." When Gallup researched public attitudes toward different types of businesses, 70 percent were "totally positive" about the computer industry and 52 percent about the automobile industry, but only 43 percent about the pharmaceutical industry. (The "legal field" was dead last at 36 percent, and the federal government came in at 41 percent.) Fully 40 percent thought that if a safety problem arose with one of the drug companies' products, they would not do the right thing. To be sure, 58 percent said the same of managed care organizations, and 76 percent of tobacco companies, but that is not the company that drug manufacturers want to keep. They are not yet as reviled as managed care, but they are coming close. In John le Carré's novel *The Constant Gardener*, pharmaceutical companies replace international spy rings as the villains. The new version of *The Manchurian Candidate* has drug companies as part of a vicious cartel aiming to capture the presidency.

At the same time, profit margins for many (though not all) drug companies are down, and so are stock valuations. Since January 2001, Bristol-Myers's stock has dropped 68 percent, Merck's 50 percent, and Pfizer's 30 percent. Innovation is also declining: most new drugs are of the "me-too" variety. The National Institute for Health Care Management recently concluded that "two-thirds of new drugs approved in 1989–2000 used active ingredients already on the market." The industry is embattled in Washington, D.C. and in many states, trying to block regulatory efforts and price restrictions.

Were all this not troubling enough, the pharmaceutical companies face a steady stream of criminal prosecutions, ranging from fraudulent billing of Medicaid to outright bribing of doctors and hospitals. Federal prosecutors, particularly in Philadelphia and Boston, have forced drug companies, including Schering-Plough, Bayer, and GlaxoSmithKline, to pay fines ranging from $86 million to $360 million for their illegal pricing and marketing practices. Whatever the consequences for company directors and stockholders, the public policy implications are extraordinary. The time may be ripe for fundamental changes in the way that the discovery, the production, and the distribution of drugs is conducted. This will not be easy—the major players are down, not out—but the prospects are real.

THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME drug companies have been the object of public anger and government scrutiny. Opium-laced products in patent medicine led Progressive reformers to enact the Pure Food and Drug Act in 1906, requiring drug makers to list all the ingredients in their formulas. (The one exception was if the drug was sold by prescription only, which led many onetime patent medicine producers to become "ethical drug manufacturers.") In 1938, the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act required companies to prove that their products were safe, and later, in the aftermath of the thalidomide scandal in 1962, to demonstrate that they were effective. In all these instances, though, the overriding concern was to make certain that the benefits of a drug outweighed its risks. The overarching goal was to ensure the quality of the drugs.

Probably the halcyon days for the industry followed on the introduction of antibiotics in the late 1940s, and they continued into the 1980s. Even thalidomide did not provoke a fundamental critique of the way the drug companies did business. In the 1990s, the situation changed dramatically, and the change was sparked mostly by the escalating costs of drugs. One consumer organization, Families USA, calculates that over the past four years prices for the thirty drugs most often used by the elderly increased 21.6 percent, four times the rate of inflation. The most widely used prescription, the cholesterol-lowering drug Lipitor, went up 27 percent. Evista, the new competitor to Viagra, went up 28 percent. Indeed, a number of health economists are convinced that drug prices are the major cause for the overall increase in national health expenditures.

The burden is the more onerous for consumers because prescription drug-taking has become a chronic national condition. In the antibiotic era, patients with fever took penicillin for five or seven days. In the era of cardiac and antihypertensive drugs, people at risk swallow a daily pill for ten, twenty, or thirty years. The annual cost for Lipitor, even if bought from an online bulk seller, is

David J. Rothman, professor of social medicine and history at Columbia University, is also president of the Institute on Medicine as a Profession.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

between $800 and $1,000. No wonder even middle-class people confront the dilemma of "treat or eat."

The fiscal implications for state and federal governments are just as profound. In 1992, Medicaid expenditure on drugs was $6.6 billion; by 1998, the sum reached $14.3 billion, and by 2002, $29.7 billion. In light of these numbers—which reflect not an increase in the number of beneficiaries but an increase in the number of prescriptions written by doctors—it is not surprising that the primary goal of legislative initiatives has been to lower prices by one or another means.

The other chief complaint about drug-company performance is the marked absence of innovation. Very little that is new has recently come out of the pipeline, although there is no consensus on why this is so. Some critics are convinced that the reason is the bottom-line mentality of drug companies. They are unwilling to take the financial risks necessary to develop a new drug, preferring instead to produce "me-too" formulas so as to capture a segment of an already established market; and so they come out with one more anti-hypertensive, one more cure for erectile dysfunction, one more pill to lower cholesterol, and devote their expenditures to massive advertising campaigns aimed at doctors and, increasingly, consumers. (To get a sense of the size of the campaigns, look at the evening network news programs: I counted fifty-six ads on the ABC/CBS/NBC nightly news, of which thirty-two were related to health.)

Other observers are persuaded that the causes of the failure go beyond corporate culture to the current state of scientific knowledge. The low-hanging fruit has already been picked. Infections are easier to treat than malignancies or the diseases that accompany aging. We may be in transition between the earlier breakthroughs of antibiotics and cardiac/pulmonary medications and a new era of novel anti-cancer agents and genetic therapies. As historians like to say, only time will tell.

II.

IT IS NO WONDER, GIVEN ALL THAT is at stake, that more books about the drug companies are appearing. Sheldon Krinsky has demonstrated, in *Science in the Public Interest*, how drug-company money is distorting academic research. Fran Hawthorne, in *The Merck Druggernaut*, has exposed the hidden world of Merck, and Katharine Greider, in *The Big Fix*, has attempted to explain how "the pharmaceutical industry rips off American consumers." The latest addition to this literature comes from the formidable Marcia Angell, the former editor-in-chief of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, who has a well-deserved reputation for bluntness. She is a powerful and fervent voice for ethics in medical and pharmaceutical research. The subtitle of her new book aptly gives her tone: "how [drug companies] deceive us and what to do about it."

Angell ably takes us through the territory in clean and clear prose. Written for a lay audience, her book carefully explains every term and concept. Angell addresses the last refuge of drug companies—that their exorbitant drug prices reflect the need to pay for research and development—by observing how much larger are their expenditures for marketing. She also describes the companies' everyday use of lures and bribes and the legal and political tactics they employ to extend their patent and monopoly rights. It is not a pretty story, and she tells it well.

But the book has an oddly familiar tone. (This may be due in part to a long and powerful analysis of the subject, called "America's Other Drug Problem," that Angell and Arnold Relman published in these pages a few years ago.) More, its argument often lacks complexity. And most disappointing, Angell has very little to say about the best strategies for change.

The major problem facing Angell and others who write about the pharmaceutical industry is that they lack access to company records or financial data. (There is one exception, to which I will return.) The richest source of information is the legal settlements that the companies have been forced to make in court or with federal prosecutors. Insightful journalists have made superb use of the cases: *The Wall Street Journal* is the most diligent in tracking them, and *The Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *The New York Times* are not far behind. Readers have learned how one drug company paid off a generic manufacturer in order to keep a competing drug out of the marketplace, and how another bribed hospital officials so that they would continue to prescribe its drug. Not coincidentally, many of these cases originated with information brought to the prosecutors by company employees turned whistleblowers. They are among the few who do enjoy access to information. And they have been well rewarded for the risks that they take: three whistleblowers who gave evidence against Schering-Plough divided $31.7 million.

Another source of reliable information comes from consumer groups, most notably Families USA, the National Institute for Health Care Management, and Public Citizen. They analyze drug prices over time and the adverse effects of some drugs (which may be unrecognized or buried in FDA committee reports). Since Angell has no unique point of entry, she relies almost entirely on these groups and on the press; almost all of her citations are to newspaper articles, websites, and releases. As a result, most of her material is, as I say, familiar.

THE ONE MAJOR EXCEPTION TO the impenetrability of the drug companies is the access that a handful of academic economists have enjoyed. Some of them, to be sure, work out of institutes that receive drug-company funding and are therefore open to suspicion. (When the Tufts Center for the Study of Drug Development concludes that it costs $800 million to bring a new drug to market, very few people think the question is settled.) But others are independent and sophisticated. For reasons that are not apparent, a number of these economists have been given access to drug-company records for the period from 1960 to 1990, and they are free to publish their results with the proviso that they not identify the companies. Thus, Rebecca Henderson and Iain Cockburn, writing in the *Journal of Health Economics*, used the records of ten unnamed American and European companies to argue that the companies are continuing to invest heavily in research, that the economic value of each patent has increased, and that large firms perform better than others. Without holding a brief for these contentions, it is odd that Angell does not discuss this economics-based literature.

The lapse is best illustrated by Angell's discussion of Taxol, the drug often prescribed for breast and ovarian cancer. As Angell tells it, the story represents a giveaway by government to industry. "No ingenuity there" is the refrain that she uses to characterize the role of Bristol-Myers, which markets the drug and profits from it. NIH discovered the substance (drawn from yew trees), uni-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

versity investigators learned how to synthesize it, and then Bristol-Myers reaped a fortune. Taxpayer-supported research, she writes, is "virtually given as a gift to a large drug company." The public pays twice—first for the grant, then for the drug. But the story told by Jordan Goodman and Vivien Walsh in *The Story of Taxol*, which Angell does not cite, is more complex. The National Cancer Institute did make the intellectual breakthroughs on Taxol, but it was in no position to fund the drug's development or to bring it to market. At an early point in its development, Taxol required an investment of $2 million, which was outside the mandate and the mentality of the NCI.

Indeed, the NCI was under external constraints to turn the potential product of its research over to industry; congressional legislation in the early 1980s directed the NIH as well as academic institutions to license laboratory findings to commercial companies as rapidly as possible. The intention, in retrospect perhaps misguided, was to promote collaboration between the academy and industry that would lead to a more efficient movement of drugs from bench to bedside. At one point in its Taxol negotiations with drug companies, the NCI did propose that the government get "a reasonable share of income once the drug is marketed for general use"; and in other instances the NIH asked companies to set a "reasonable price" when they received a license to one of its compounds. But the companies balked. The NIH backed down, apparently more eager to get the drug out than to earn income or to control price. (In this same tradition, the FDA has just announced that it will not compel Abbott to cut back the price of its AIDS drug, which went from $1.75 for a daily dose in December 2003 to $8.57 now. According to the FDA, it was up to Congress and the administration to force such a change. For its part, Abbott said that the FDA's decision was "good for patients.")

Angell devotes her last chapter to examining how we might "get our money's worth" from drug companies. She fires off a series of recommendations. American patent law should be revised; the FDA should be strengthened and require new drugs to be tested not against placebos but against older drugs for the same condition, so as to reduce the me-too phenomenon (this is her favorite); the NIH should create an institute to oversee clinical testing; those responsible for medical education should avoid drug-company money; direct-to-consumer advertising should be banned; professional medical societies should become self-supporting rather than relying on drug-company largesse; and drug prices should be uniform. And Angell ends with three pages of advice to patients: when a physician writes you a prescription, ask whether he or she has financial ties to the drug company, receives gifts from it, or sees its sales representatives; ask your representatives in Congress how much they receive in drug-company contributions; and "pay no attention to direct-to-consumer ads for prescription drugs."

Angell has nothing to say about how these changes might be implemented. As she knows well, drug companies have an exceptionally powerful lobbying presence in Washington, and spend huge sums on campaign contributions. Given this leverage, and the Bush administration's loyalties, it is highly unlikely that the length of patent periods will be reduced or the FDA's independent authority increased. And even in this age of consumer empowerment and personal autonomy, patients are not likely to be quite so confrontational with their doctors. All the while, professional medical societies have hardly distinguished themselves in their ethical relationships to drug companies, unless you believe that enlarging the take is the right tactic.

III.

To note the shortcomings in Angell's approach is easy. The more difficult challenge is to offer an alternative vision. Even if a close mapping of the new territory is not yet feasible, it is still useful to chart some preliminary directions. A two-pronged strategy serves best: what might be done in the short term to improve the performance of the drug industry, and what might be done in the long term to devise a counterpart to the current system. Is it possible to create new types of parallel organizations to carry out the discovery, the development, and the marketing of drugs?

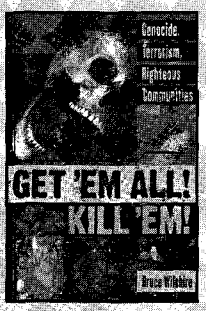
Since drug-company manipulation and malfeasance is better recognized now than ever before and the high cost of drugs has an impact on so many constituencies, state and federal govern-

GET 'EM ALL! KILL 'EM!

Genocide, Terrorism, Righteous Communities

By Bruce Wilshire

"This is an epic study of genocide and terrorism."
—**Thomas Berry, author of *The Dream of the Earth***



"Wilshire brings together the diverse strands of genocidal events to demonstrate that at our worst we are an embarrassment to the universe."
—**Vine Deloria, Jr., author of *God is Red***

'Get 'Em All, Kill 'Em! will be of enormous interest to all those who are committed to understanding the experience of being human."
—**George Atwood, Professor of Psychology, Rutgers University**

"Wilshire gradually. . . draw(s) us inexorably into the dark heart of the world's polarized present, at the sharp tooth-edge of history and of our own possible extinction."
—**David Abram, author of *The Spell of the Sensuous***

Why do groups become genocidal and try to kill or disable all members of another group, even sometimes killing fetuses? When we too quickly classify these acts as evil, we block inquiry into particular causes and conditions of genocide, and lose the ability to change them. *Get 'Em All! Kill 'Em!* supplies a systematic explanation of what, until now, has seemed to be an inexplicable phenomenon.

SEPTEMBER 2004 • 272 PAGES • ISBN 0-7391-0873-5 • $24.95 CLOTH
ORDER ONLINE TO RECEIVE A 15% DISCOUNT!

Lexington Books

4501 FORBES BOULEVARD, SUITE 200
LANHAM, MD 20706
800.462.6420
WWW.LEXINGTONBOOKS.COM

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ments may undertake corrective actions in the short term. A policy that sought to mobilize public opinion to promote congressional legislation certainly makes sense and might produce changes. But so far the record in Washington has not been impressive. Industry, not the elderly, will reap the benefits from the new Medicare drug bill. Not only are the provisions of the legislation so bewildering that few people have signed up for the program, but the law declares unequivocally that the government may not bargain with the drug companies over purchase prices for drugs, which amounts to a windfall for them. There are bills in the congressional hopper that would better serve the citizenry: both the House and the Senate have bills that would allow the re-importation of drugs from Canada, where they are substantially less expensive, and John Kerry is trying to make this a campaign issue. Yet it is doubtful that reform will ever make it to the floor, and be passed by both houses, and be signed by this president.

The sheer amount of action on the state level is impressive. The National Conference of State Legislatures calculates that forty-three of the forty-four states that held sessions in 2004 had a pharmaceutical bill or resolution introduced. (The total number of bills was more than 320.) The bills most likely to be enacted involved prescription-drug benefits for constituents; thirty-nine states now offer such programs. Moreover, about a dozen states are considering bills that would reduce their drug costs; one would allow nursing homes to give drugs unused by one patient to another, a second would facilitate the purchase of drugs from Canada.

But here, too, rhetoric usually outpaces reality. Only a few states have successfully waged war on drug companies. Maine captured national attention in 2000 when it enacted MaineRx, the first state prescription-price-control plan that would enable low-income, uninsured people to purchase drugs at the same price paid by the state's Medicaid program. The drug companies immediately took Maine to federal court, arguing that the law infringed on interstate commerce. The Supreme Court recently ruled in Maine's favor, and although legal skirmishing continues, the state may soon implement its program, and perhaps inspire others. Vermont, for its part, requires drug companies to report all gifts to doctors over $25 and has a plan to import drugs from Canada. (There is even a bill pending that would force pharmaceutical companies to disclose publicly their marketing costs.) In all, as in the case of health insurance, state-by-state campaigns may be more effective than an exclusive focus on Washington. Retail activism may do better than wholesale.

Not much should be expected of the FDA. It has increasingly bent to political control, responding almost reflexively to Bush-administration directives. The FDA has been fighting vigorously to prevent the re-importation of drugs from Canada on the really frivolous ground that it could not guarantee product safety. (As one wag asked, where are the graves in Canada?) The agency has denied Vermont the right to establish its pilot drug-distribution plan with a Canadian company. In August the state's governor and attorney general announced that they are suing to get the decision reversed. So, too, the FDA did not allow the morning-after pill to be sold over the counter, despite the recommendation of its advisory board. And *The Wall Street Journal* recently ran a front-page story recounting how the FDA caved in to the complaints of a medical-device maker and removed from its website an article that raised questions about the safety of the company's product.

Can physicians, if not their organizations, be mobilized to change drug-company practices? The idea is certainly appealing: after all, they hold the leverage of the prescription pad, and so the industry finally depends on them. The profession does have a cadre of members who are committed to such an agenda and have impressive advocacy skills. Their numbers may even be growing, now that medicine is no longer regarded as it was, say, between 1965 and 1995, as a sure route to a two-car garage. But habits die hard, and many doctors continue to carry a powerful sense of entitlement. Not only do they deny the overwhelming data demonstrating that drug-company gifts affect prescribing patterns (why else would the companies spend the money?), but some among them insist that they fully deserve whatever dinners, travel, hotel accommodations, pens, pads, and golf balls come their way.

THE BEST HOPE FOR SHORT-term reform almost certainly rests with the law, both as federal prosecutors apply it and as the Office of Inspector General (OIG) of Health and Human Services interprets it. Oddly, these officials seem to be immune to political pressure as they try to rein in drug companies. Over the past five years, as Susan Chimonas, a research associate at Columbia University, has calculated, drug companies have paid some $3 billion in fines and settlements, which does not make much of a dent in their profits but certainly does capture their attention. Sometimes simply filing a suit brings about effective change. This past June Eliot Spitzer, the attorney general of New York state, sued Glaxo for not releasing all its data on the safety of Paxil, its antidepressant drug—and not only did Glaxo immediately produce the data, but it and several other drug companies as well have announced that they will fully disclose the results of all their clinical trials.

The prosecutions and the lawsuits, along with negative public sentiment and physician activism, have prompted the pharmaceutical industry and several medical societies, including the American Medical Association, to issue guidelines on doctor–drug company relationships. On the whole, the declarations operate at

Cloud Machine

Built on a standing pool,
it looked so much like a ship,
the architect lamented
it had no further water
to glide out into.
He wished to bury the land
in mist, cover it in vapor,
render it undetectable
from space, bend grass
beneath a fallen ceiling.
People came to disappear
in the spreading, palpable
wetness, where a woman's
dress grew damp as cloth
close to a mouth in winter.
In the absence of direction,
there was a stunning
of the senses and the orienting
poles of movement:
standing still in the fog,
a visitor had no more sign
of being there
than the sound of steam
spraying, and other
dislocated voices.

ERICA EHRENBERG

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the margins—allowing for "modest" gifts, whatever that may mean, and ruling out gifts to spouses. Even more limiting, they are voluntary, without provisions for enforcement. But the single most important development is that the OIG has issued its own "Compliance Program Guidance for Pharmaceutical Manufacturers." Although it relies heavily—really too heavily—on the AMA and drug-company guidelines, it does make clear that bribes and kickbacks will not be tolerated, that drug-company payments and gifts must not affect clinical decision-making, and that research and educational grants are suspect when they come from the companies' marketing divisions.

It is true that the "Guidance" has loopholes—physicians may continue to be handsomely paid for their work as "consultants," and not all gifts are banned. Yet the spotlight that the OIG is shining on company practices may prove effective. It appears that drug companies are beginning to beef up their compliance divisions and are putting a stop to some unsavory practices. Apparently, spouses are no longer invited to "educational" dinners or reimbursed for travel to conferences; and doctors cannot receive so-called "dash and dine" gifts, whereby drug companies pay for take-out orders and insert promotional material in the bag. Perhaps the most glaring deficiency in the "Guidance" is the absence of any form of monitoring; there is no way to know how often underhanded practices continue. But the stakes for malfeasance are certainly getting higher.

One other strategy for reform is beginning to emerge. Commercial law firms and public-interest organizations are starting to file class-action lawsuits against drug companies, on the model of tobacco litigation. The analogy is not perfect: drug companies do not make their profits by killing people. But there is room to maneuver, including bringing suits against drug companies for their pricing techniques, their faulty advertising, and their illegal marketing practices. If these cases make some headway in the courts, plaintiffs may win the right to discovery, obtain heretofore privileged documents, and help to pierce the walls protecting drug-company activity. The knowledge gained and the publicity that ensues may be even more important than the monetary rewards. There may also be a portent in the settlement reached this May between Warner Lambert and forty-six state attorneys general in the matter of how the company publicized the off-label, non-approved uses for its drug Neurontin. It stipulated that Warner Lambert will pay $21 million to fund a Prescriber and Consumer Education Program administered by an independent multi-state working group. Of those funds, $6 million is designated specifically for television advertisements. It will be intriguing to see how the drug reformers build on this precedent.

WHATEVER THE IMMEDIATE prospects of success in altering the behavior of the pharmaceutical companies, it is necessary to consider a more radical strategy: to devise alternatives to the current mode of producing and selling drugs. Rather than focus on "how to save the pharmaceutical industry," as Angell ironically titles her last chapter, the aim should be to establish a separate track. The guiding principle of any new approach (which I have been exploring with a group of doctors, lawyers, and economists) must be that the discovery and the distribution of drugs should be driven by something other than profit margins. Pharmacology is too important to our well-being to be left exclusively to the marketplace. More precisely, something must be done to lower drug prices not only in the Third World but also in the United States.

How might such a program be advanced? Ideas are still very much on the drawing board, but some of the right questions are being asked. What tasks does the pharmaceutical industry now perform that an alternative system would have to accomplish? A track separate from the drug companies would not threaten the production of scientific knowledge; most of that work would continue to be done at academic and NIH centers. Drug companies do usually synthesize the compounds that have been discovered in the laboratory, figure out how to produce them in large quantities, go on to test their safety and their efficacy in three phases of clinical trials, and then market them to doctors and, of late, to the public. Could some other body perform these functions, or arrange for them to be performed? Could an academic medical center or the NIH foot the bill (it is not trivial) for clinical trials? What rewards would have to be provided to have these centers or institutes undertake the risks and forgo alliances with drug companies? Would a parallel system be able to reduce marketing expenditures, cutting back on sales reps and reducing advertising? Would this lead to lower drug prices? And what legal changes, licensing agreements, financial investments, and financial returns would be necessary to sustain such a system? Questions, questions, questions. But in light of the present system, and its unholy alliance of medicine, politics, and capitalism, it seems right to imagine a new beginning. ■

NEW!! EXCITING!!

JOIN With Others in a Fascinating Adventure

Discuss. . .

Rebuilding Human Society

Go To:
www.committeefor correspondence.net

C.L.Corey, Retired Professor
Published Author

THE MACHIAVELLIAN NEOCONSERVATIVES

Commentary

http://www.worthingtonsworld.com

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE/ PERSONAL ASSISTANT

New York City. Highly intelligent, resourceful individuals with exceptional communication skills sought to undertake research projects and administrative tasks for one of Wall Street's most successful entrepreneurs. We welcome applications from writers, musicians, artists, or others who may be pursuing other professional goals in the balance of their time. $90k-$110k to start (depending on qualifications). Resume to: gen8r@spsfind.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WASHINGTON DIARIST

Extirpation

"FACED WITH THE INTENTION of the Sharon government to destroy settlements in the land of Israel and to deliver them into the hands of the enemy, to extirpate settlers, and to expel them by violence, we declare that this extirpation and this expulsion is a crime against the nation and a crime against humanity, an expression of cruelty, wickedness, and imperiousness, which is designed to deny the rights of Jews to live in their land because they are Jews. We determine that the purpose of the Israel Defense Forces is to defend against the enemy and not to conduct operations against Jewish citizens. The IDF is the army of the people and not the army of a political group." These fiery propositions (I translate them from *Haaretz* of September 10) appeared in a statement issued last week by luminaries of the Israeli right, including a legendary soldier of Israel's early years and a variety of Benjamin Netanyahu's relatives. It also calls on Israeli troops "to heed the call of their national conscience and their human conscience" and refuse to serve in any action against any settlements, and on "the intended victims of the expulsion," the settlers, "not to cooperate with the machinery of expulsion, not to accept reparations, [and] to oppose the extirpation actively but without harming anyone of their own nation, even though they have come to destroy the homes in which they live."

GOD'S VANGUARD IS ANXIOUS. IT IS contemplating the prospect of historical failure. Its erstwhile savior, Ariel Sharon, who seems finally to have been impressed by the strategic threat to Israel that is posed by Palestinian demographics, and perhaps also to have advanced in his understanding of the relationship of peace to security, is preparing to withdraw from the hell that is Gaza, and he has conceded that a resolution to the conflict will require not only the creation of a Palestinian state but the renunciation of Jewish settlements in Palestine. Infamy! Reason! And so the settlers and their patrons are beginning a battle, so far only of ideas. Their fury is useful, since it reveals the extent to which they have departed from the moral and historical good sense of their society.

THE EVACUATION OF SETTLEMENTS ON the West Bank a "crime against humanity"? Jews should not be so wanton with the term. We have more than a rough idea of what a crime against humanity looks like. The end of Ofra and Elon Moreh and Itamar and Bracha and Tappuah would be a crime only against the plans and the fantasies of the men and women, giants in their own eyes, who live there; and worse things can be imagined, much worse. These "victims" flatter themselves when they virulently liken their opponents to the agents of radical evil; but eschatology and narcissism go back a long way. And when they warn of "a crime against the nation," they employ the idiom of nationalism at its very rankest. The implication is that it is treason to differ with them. This is linguistic violence.

THEN THERE IS THE TENDER APPEAL TO rights. Is the abandonment of the settlements really "designed to deny the rights of Jews to live in their land"? But the settlers do not wish only to live on the ground where Jacob dreamed and Joseph was buried, they wish also to rule it. A purely spiritual excitement, of the sort that Jewish pilgrims to these places found for many centuries, is not enough for them. They seek sovereignty. Their metaphysics must be consummated with their politics. It is certainly the case that the right to Nablus and the right to Tel Aviv is the same right—a right, after all, pertains to the whole; but the Palestinians have this right too, which is why the partition of the land, territorial compromise, the wisdom of the founders of the Jewish state who prevailed over the ideological ancestors of the indignant irredentists of today, remains the only answer, because it signifies an agreement to suspend the rhetoric of rights, which is the rhetoric of war.

"TO DEFEND AGAINST THE ENEMY AND not to operate against Jewish citizens": these are xenophobic definitions, according to which the enemy can never be Jewish citizens. The IDF is not the "army of the people," it is the army of the state. But the state of Israel has never been as vivid to the settlers as the land of Israel. In the historiosophy of the dirt-worshippers, 1948 was just a step toward the climax of Jewish history that they represent, and the secular and sensible (and security-obsessed) heroes of 1948 were just the messiah's useful idiots. The signatories' care for their own kind is evidenced also in their admonition to the settlers not to hurt "anyone of their own nation." This is supposed to establish their ethical delicacy. The impression is somewhat dispelled, however, by their distinction between "national conscience" and "human conscience": were national conscience to contradict human conscience, it is not hard to guess which they would obey. Extirpation and expulsion is what some of them have in mind for others. For the radicals in the territories, some lives have always been worth more than other lives. Jewish lives trump Arab lives, and it is considered a sign of weakness to show a scruple about the justice of such a discrimination, the mark of a girlie Jew. But the truth is that the radicals are even crueler. They do not love all members of their ethnos equally. Some Jewish lives are worth more than other Jewish lives. The life of the Jewish man who wants to keep the Sabbath in a sea of Palestinians is more valuable than the life of the Jewish soldier who dies to protect him. Why else would the settlers allow so many fellow Israelis to perish in their defense? It is hard to look at the falsely meek, Torah-clutching Jews of Gush Katif without despising them as the most selfish Jews of their time.

NO, THE SETTLEMENTS ARE NOT THE SOLE obstacle to peace; but they are an obstacle, and they are "our" obstacle. No, the Palestinians are not yet keen for diplomacy, too many of them are still betting on bombs and babies, but this suits the Israeli right fine. Under cover of Palestinian folly, it proceeds with its folly. Netanyahu says that a referendum must be held before Israeli disengagement from Gaza, but I do not recall that a referendum was held before Israeli engagement in Gaza. Then, as now, policy was made by a democratically elected government. But these days the head of such a government is denounced as "the dictator" in the streets and menaced by Kabbalistic curses and extremist plots. Extirpation and expulsion: You would think that Ariel Sharon were Hadrian, or Ferdinand, or the Czar. There are grounds for dread.

LEON WIESELTIER

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hot Button Issues

If you can't wait to read the nation's most influential political & cultural journal each week, we understand. That's why subscribers to *The New Republic* are entitled to get a special bonus with their magazine.

The New Republic Digital. A fast way to get TNR ahead of schedule. Every week.

As a member of *The New Republic Digital* you'll get:

- A full digital PDF version of the print magazine available on Fridays, three full days before the issue hits newsstands
- All print content also available at *TNR Online* (www.tnr.com)
- Access to all web-only features on *TNR Online*
- Full access to archives dating back 5 years
- Politics and Books & The Arts weekly newsletters e-mailed to your home or office

To sign up for *TNR Digital*, go to www.tnr.com/digital

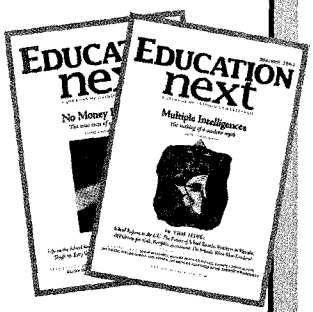
THE NEW REPUBLIC DIGITAL

You'll be the first to know.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

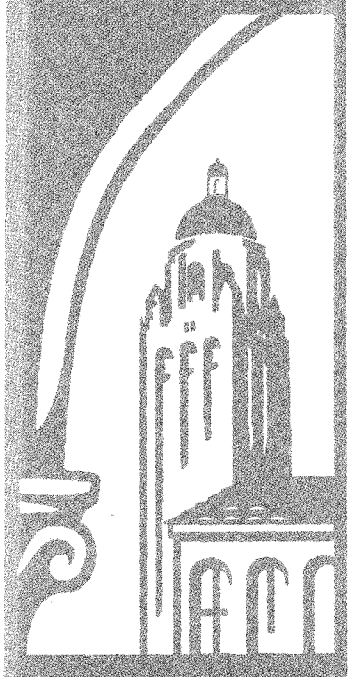
What Works in the Classroom?

INTERESTED IN CUTTING-EDGE IDEAS ABOUT K–12 EDUCATION?



SUBSCRIBE TO
Education Next: A Journal of Opinion and Research

Visit us online at www.educationnext.org or call 800.935.2882 to receive a free copy.



Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

Teachers would like to know what teaching practices and instructional materials would work best for their students. Every teacher has heard the phrases "studies show that . . ." and "research-based program," but all too often teachers can't find usable research for their K–12 classrooms.

Advances based on the scientific method abound today—everywhere but in the K–12 classroom. Teachers need high-quality research into what works and what doesn't work, but that need is largely unfulfilled. For example, a 1998 report to the California State Board of Education examined 8,727 published studies of mathematics education and found that only 110 met minimal validity criteria.

The importance of high-quality research—and the difficulty of finding the useful research needle in the mostly straw haystack of current studies—has prompted the U.S. Department of Education to provide a screening service in the form of the new What Works Clearinghouse web site (see www.whatworks.ed.gov). The Clearinghouse chose peer-assisted learning (also known as "group learning") and middle-school mathematics as the first topics to investigate.

So far, the results confirm the perception that we have a long way to go in the scientific study of education. For the peer-learning category, 15 of 191 studies met Clearinghouse criteria. (Some 109 studies have yet to be screened.) For the mathematics category, one met Clearinghouse criteria, one was close (met with reservations), and 48 did not meet the standards (20 are yet to be screened). Worse yet, neither of the two acceptable mathematics studies showed any significant difference between methods.

Some argue that the standards used to evaluate studies are too stringent. A review of the reports for the 17 accepted studies quickly dispels this notion. They are small studies with a host of methodological weaknesses. If anything, the Clearinghouse may have engaged in a bit of grade inflation so that it didn't end up rejecting all the studies. Those who want the Clearinghouse to set lower standards are most likely the producers of poor-quality research or those who support weak programs for philosophical rather than evidence-based reasons.

Others fear that the Clearinghouse will go beyond the Department of Education's mandate by endorsing particular programs. However, the Clearinghouse only looks at the quality of studies, not the quality of the programs they address. Maybe this is a moot point; so far it looks as if the Clearinghouse won't be perceived as offering a strong endorsement for any program in the foreseeable future. What may be the strongest of the 17 accepted studies show no added benefit of the program being evaluated, and none of the studies comes close to providing any strong supporting evidence.

It is hoped that the Clearinghouse will encourage better research, which is one of the goals of the project. **Teachers need educational research that provides good advice on which materials and methods are best for classroom use for specified academic objectives with various groups of students. Clearly, the message from the What Works Clearinghouse is that educational research has a long way to go.**

—Paul Clopton and Bill Evers

Paul Clopton is a medical research statistician for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in San Diego. Bill Evers is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution and a member of Hoover's Koret Task Force on K–12 Education.

HOOVER INSTITUTION

. . . ideas defining a free society

Hoover Institution Stanford University Stanford, CA 94305-6010 Tel: 877.466.8374 Fax: 650.723.1687 info@hoover.stanford.edu www.hoover.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED